

BLACK

LINES

Oct. 1999, Vol. 4, No. 9 Free/\$2 outside Chicago EXPRESSIONS FROM BLACK GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDERED LIFE

Terrain of Freedom

Exhibit includes
historic sculpture
by John Quincy
Adams Ward,
The Freedman,
(1863) considered
the first realistic
representation of
an African
American
cast in bronze.
Part of the
'American Art
and the Civil
War' exhibit at
the Art Institute,
thru Nov. 28.



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OUTLINES, NIGHTLINES, EN LA VIDA,
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Photo by Rosalind Glanton

CREATING VISIBILITY

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with Dr. Tanda Hughes and Alicia Matthews PhD -7:00pm

Thursday, October 14th: Lez Chat -
"The Brothers meet the Sisters"
Adodi joins Affinity for an open discussion;
men and women welcome- 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 16th: 40 Plus "I'm not your Sister, I'm your Lover" - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 28th: New Volunteer Orientation - 6:30 p.m.

Friday October 29th: "It's a Play Thang"
Join us for Videos, Games, Food, and Fun - 7:00 p.m.

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BLACK LINES

October 1999
Volume 4, Number 9

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BLACKlines

is on the World Wide Web:
<http://www.suba.com/~outlines/>

See page 16 for
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BLACKlines

DEADLINE is the 5th of each month for articles, calendar, photos, art, poetry, viewpoints, etc. Material used on a space-available basis.

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Editorial

by LaJaunessee Jordan

I don't think I could ever stop loving someone once I've loved them—ex-lovers included. So I understood my lover's pain when her ex-lover died. Now we all tell stories of the ex—some good, some not so good. But for the most part most people don't wish them dead. This is kind of a strange spot to be in, the current lover helping your partner go through the news, the pain, the "Should I or shouldn't I go?"

I have a former lover who is significantly older than me who is not in the best health. I am concerned that in the near future I might be faced with what my sweetie is going through now. Even though that relationship occurred many years ago, I know that I would be devastated. I am still very good friends with most of my ex-lovers.

I try to be there for my lover. I try to let her know that whatever she wants to do or say is okay. I try to let her know that I will do whatever she needs me to do. I try to give her space, yet to be there for her. I don't know what to say. I tell her that I could not imagine how badly I would feel if I lost someone with whom I shared my dreams and fears, my goals and failures, someone with whom I shared intimacy, even though things didn't work out.

She told me she wanted me to go with her. We went to the first relative's home. We were both treated very warmly and respectfully. It was obvious that I am the current lover. It didn't matter. I had some anxiety related to going. It was quickly erased shortly after I entered the home. That went well. On to the next relative's home. Anxiety creeps up once again. There is nothing but warmth and stories about the deceased. That tells me something about who she was. I watched many lesbians enter the service—young and old, butch and femme. Lesbian after lesbian after lesbian. I had



never met her, yet I was emotional about her passing, possibly because my sweetie was emotional, possibly because of what everything I saw and heard told me about her, possibly both.

Today was a difficult day for my lover, as was it for me. We never know how we're going to respond to someone's passing. At the time of my grandmother's funeral, I could not bring myself to get out of the car. It was as if it was too hard to say "Goodbye." And I think of myself as a strong individual, able to do anything. Yet, weakness overcame me.

I had no intention of writing what I wrote today.

I never really intend to share so much of me. It just happens. And because it happens, it's supposed to happen. I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness in sharing your comments about my work whenever readers take the time to do so. Please continue to let myself and the other writers know whatcha thinkin' 'bout.

[An editorial by Jordan in *BLACKLINES* won an honorable mention in the national gay and lesbian media awards, the *Vice Versa Awards*. *OUTLINES* also received 13 awards.]

LETTER: Black Pride organizers

As President of the committee for Chicago Black Pride, I find it necessary to respond to the write-up in your August issue covering Chicago's first annual Black Pride.

The Black Pride Committee was formed in 1999 involving persons of different social groups, and organizations, in the Chicago area. Sub-committees were also formed to help plan and organize for a successful weekend. All official events held that particular weekend were sponsored by the committees as a whole and not one particular group, club or organization. The Black Pride Committee had no jurisdiction over private events also held that weekend.

Therefore, I find it necessary to correct an issue in regard to our main event, which was held at the Irving Park Beach. This was the Black Pride Festival, not the Chicago Friends Picnic. The Pride committee has worked diligently to correct this very issue among committee members and would like to be consistent at all costs.

On behalf of the Pride Committee, its Board of Directors, and myself, we certainly do appreciate the fantastic coverage, and the great shots.

Sincerely, Mr. Kenneth Pickens, President
(chicagoblackpride@yahoo.com)

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Images from the annual Festival of African-American Foods in Oak Park. Photos by Israel



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SUSTIVA has manageable side effects. Most side effects are mild to moderate and can be managed. The most significant side effects associated with SUSTIVA therapy have been nervous system symptoms (dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating and/or abnormal dreams) and rash. These usually subside within the first two to four weeks of treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may help make nervous system symptoms less noticeable.

¹NNRTI - non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor.

For more information on SUSTIVA, call 1-800-4PHARMA or visit our website at <http://www.sustiva.com>. For more information on the updated DHHS Guidelines, a PDF file of the guidelines is available at <http://www.hivatis.org>

**Now listed among
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guidelines.¹**

Pregnancy should be avoided in women receiving SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in primates dosed with SUSTIVA. Barrier contraception should always be used in combination with other methods of contraception.

Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA.

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking SUSTIVA. Your doctor may change your medicines or change their dose. You should discuss your prior medical conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis, etc.) with your doctor before taking SUSTIVA.

We know that coping with HIV is difficult enough. Your treatment doesn't have to be. Ask your doctor about SUSTIVA. For more important information see the next page for Patient Information about SUSTIVA.

FOR HIV

Finally, a once daily medication to treat HIV.

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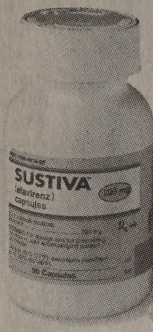
www.sustiva.com

1. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV Infection. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), December 1998.

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SUSTIVA™ (efavirenz) capsules **Patient Information about SUSTIVA™**

(sus-TEE-vah)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection
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Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. Rarely, patients have more serious side effects that may affect mood or ability to think clearly. These side effects occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
 - Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.
- Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Blaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at <http://www.sustiva.com>.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals
Wilmington, DE 19880
Issued September, 1998

Generator, Vix close

After seven years of being one of a handful of venues that catered to the Black gay community, the Generator nightclub has closed. Eddie Watson, the club's manager, said that on Sunday morning, Sept. 12, he received a call from the Generator's owners saying the club was closed. Watson expressed dismay that the Generator's closing meant that 26 Generator employees no longer had jobs. Although the Generator had faced competition in recent years from newer entries into the market, during the last Friday the club was open, sources say, the club was packed.

According to Watson, the owners said that they did not want to subject their patrons to police raids and hence the closure. Watson said that on the last Thursday night the club was open, law enforcement entered the club twice. Watson stated that while at the club the officers ques-

tioned those present about illegal activities alleged to have occurred at the club.

Watson expressed his desire to remain in the nightclub business and said he was exploring his options with potential partners.

The Generator's closing was the second closing in 30 days for an establishment catering to Black gays here. The Vix also shuttered its doors in September after being in business for over a year.

Stewart wins award

Openly gay actor Byron Stewart won the Black Theatre Alliance/Ira Aldridge Award for Best Leading Actor in a Play (Drama or Comedy) for his performance as Sir Damone in Dr. Shirlene Holmes' *Conversation With a Diva*. He will also receive an After Dark Award Oct. 11.

Black Pride set

Chicago will host its second Black Pride Festival, "Independence 2000," the 4th of July weekend—June 29-July 3,



Dramatist and poet Ntozake Shange (right) at the African Festival of the Arts in August, with her sister Ifa Bayeza, director of the Chennin's Center for the Arts. Photo by Jean Young

2000. This weekend is an annual gathering celebrating the Black lesbian, gay, bi-affective and transgender community in the Windy City.

Independence '99 was enjoyed by over 10,000 brothas and sistas and was a vast success. The theme for next year's event is "An Explosion of Heritage." Independence 2000 will feature activities for the entire Black LesBiGayTrans community including live performances, cultural events, seminars and a lakefront festival.

Evening activities will include parties hosted by various organizations and bars.

The official host hotel is the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, 2233 S. Martin Luther King Dr. Reservations can be made (312) 567-1234 or 1-800-233-1234, ask for the Chocolate City/The Rails/Chicago Black Pride rate.

Volunteers and sponsors are still needed. Call (773) 731-8665, or e-mail the group at chicagoblackpride@yahoo.com

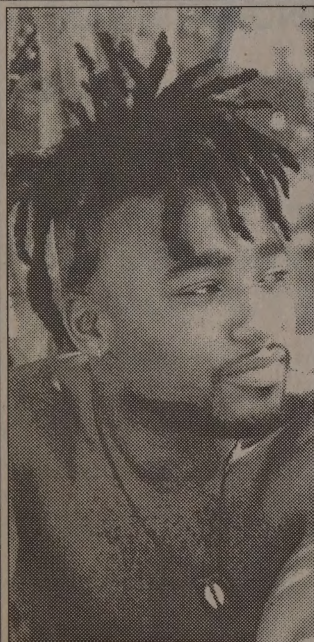


Photo By: Israel Wright

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Angela Davis speaks

by Robert Schultz

Internationally known social and political activist Angela Davis spoke to overflow crowds at the South Side's Woodson Regional Library, and for De Paul's campus at St. Vincent's Church, in September. Davis, who came out as a lesbian in OUT magazine more than a year ago, said that America is using incarceration as its first response to social problems whereas Davis believes that prisons should be the last alternative. The impact of the over-reliance on prisons is having a disproportionate and deleterious impact on communities of color, Davis argued.

Davis explained that the prison system should be thought of as the prison industrial complex. Seemingly disconnected phenomenon such as the calls for metal detectors in high schools, "three strikes" criminal

laws, the privatization of prisons, and the disappearing social safety net can be more readily examined when the public discourse is focused on this prison industrial complex.

Even though the current economy is strong, Davis argued that the economy has left many people behind and that wealth is concentrated more firmly than ever in fewer hands. Davis said that society has segregated the politically and economically disenfranchised from the public consciousness and as a consequence many believe that such groups don't count. Davis

Davis with Professor Lisa Brook and Dr. Harvette Grey at DePaul Cultural Center Sept. 10. Photo by Jean Young



appealed for a new conception of democracy: economic democracy, racial democracy, gender democracy, democracy with respect to gender orientation as she argued for a more critical and humane examination of the impact of the social policy on incarceration and prisons.

Angela & Ruth

by Donna Rose

It has been quite a while since last moved to climb stairs to sit at keyboard, and write ... however, I have felt rejuvenated from my attendance at Ms. Angela Davis's address, which was

about the prison industrial complex, and strategizing how to address the needs of our times. It is as ominous as it sounds ...

Before I get comfortable with my own opinion, I wanted to first acknowledge and thank the many number of organizations, and their respective memberships, and individuals who made the Sunday reception terrific for Ms. Ruth Ellis, Aug. 29 at the Film School of the Art Institute, especially: Affinity, Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays, Adodi, Lambda Publications/BLACKLINES/OUTLINES, J. Young; Yvonne Welbon; Executive Sweet; Donna Todd (beautiful table!); National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum; the Art Institute Film School staff; Khuli Zabany; Barbara Ransby; my dear, sistafriends at Literary Exchange, who made an idea come to be.

It was a delight to look out and see such an intergenerational, interracial, multiple language, interattitudinal crowd of colored folk at both events!

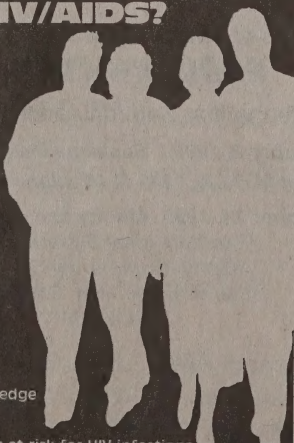
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What can you do to help fight the spread of HIV/AIDS?

Chicago's HIV Prevention Planning Group, in cooperation with the Chicago Department of Public Health, is looking for individuals to serve on its city wide community alliance.

You may be eligible for membership if you:

- Are a resident with knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues
- or
- Can represent populations at risk for HIV infections
- or
- Are active in the community
- and



Richard M. Daley
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IN LOVING MEMORY



BARRETA WILLIAMS
JULY 27, 1999

CHRISTINE PAIGE
MARCH 22, 1996



QUONA CLARK
MARCH 2, 1993

TO THE MURDERERS OF OUR SISTERS: HOW DARE YOU!

- HOW DARE YOU TAKE IT UPON YOURSELF TO TAKE SUCH BEAUTIFUL HUMAN LIVES OR ANY LIFE.
- HOW DARE YOU CAUSE SO MUCH PAIN TO ALL WHO KNEW AND LOVED THEM.
- HOW DARE YOU INVADE OUR COMMUNITY WITH SUCH A HORRENDOUS TRAGEDY.
- HOW DARE YOU BRING BLACK CLOUDS OF DISMAY OVER OUR RAINBOW OF HOPE AND UNITY.
- I HOPE THAT YOUR CONSCIENCE EXPLODES WITH GUILT.
- I HOPE THAT EVERYTHING YOU TOUCH REMINDS YOU OF THESE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN.
- I PRAY THAT YOU END IT IN YOUR SOUL TO ADMIT RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCEPT JUSTICE.

TO OUR ABSENT ANGELS: MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU

TransGENESIS,

Flame Monroe (original author),
and the Transgender Community



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The Latest  HEALTH  PERSONAL WELL-BEING

DONNA from 8

Now, what do these two sistahs have in common? They both graced our fair city within two weeks of each other, and both are creating legacies for all to witness ... both imbued with a sense of purpose, and women-loving sistas!

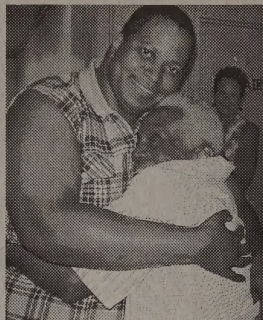
The similarities are more complex, and surprisingly subtle. Angela Davis spoke to the crowd on the prison industrial complex, and the ironic tragedy it is for a democratic society to put more time and money to building prisons than to address issues that seem to indicate environmental stressors and indicators ... like, housing, education of the citizens; healthcare ... a frighteningly swiftly disappearing benefit for the worker ... but our society is geared up to warehouse all who dare be aberrant, which for colored folk also tends to imply criminality ... if you are different, you must be "bad" ... in effect, rendered criminal by societal mores.

By her word, Ms. Ruth had never been closeted ... she just lived her life ... living a sense of community; providing shelter for young, queer, folk new to the north, and in need of a decent bed and lodgings ... what is remarkable about Ruth, is that she is actively leading a lesbian life of service to others ... she gets groceries for other seniors in her building [where she lives in Detroit], yet she's likely the oldest resident herself at 100 years young! Her message, so deceptively subtle in its simplicity, was simply to love.

Both women do ... that is clear, and both love fiercely in each her way.

That is the strength and the radical content of their respective works.

I got the impression that no one expected an audience for Angela Davis. I hope the evidence corrected that erroneous notion that the auditorium at Woodson Library—which only held 200 seats—would somehow be adequate for this sista! Unbelievable! There were up to 300 people gathered in the



Ruth Ellis attended the Chicago premiere of the film about her life. She's pictured left with LaJaunessee Jordan, and right with filmmaker Yvonne Welbon. Photos by Tracy Baim and Jean Young

lobby, out in front, and then the 200 seated inside ... many folk left, since there was no clear idea of a plan. And a rather slow address of the problems as they occurred. Essentially, poor logistics/planning/people moving ... and yet the people waited and eventually got chairs from the library to sit in lobby ... speakers appeared from "nowhere," so that those gathered could hear the words.

Some info was frightening. That the numbers of incarcerated persons has grown in leaps and bounds since the 1960s with 200,000 people jailed; 500,000 jailed, and up to more than one million today; numbers with all folk detained, jailed imprisoned, in detention, or on parole exceeds five million. That only Russian prison stats rival the U.S., interesting—the free nation rivals the former communist regime. This data is ominous in that a democratic state spends more resources on building jails and prisons than educating its citizens, attending to healthcare, housing, and/or employment.

Ms. Davis observed that the poor are becoming poorer, and that the gap between those who can afford to eat and be sheltered will widen between those who can't do the aforementioned. This results in the lack of hope ... the lack of attainment due to lack of access, and all contribute to more prisons to warehouse all who will surely break some rule or another when rules don't ever seem to work in YOUR favor. Davis was



only philosophically (with me, who else) divergent on a couple of points ... I don't attempt to glamorize in any way violent, criminal behavior. I, too, have visited prisons, as part of a citizen's review board, and not everyone imprisoned is entirely innocent. However, it does seem that certain segments of society are more likely to be imprisoned than others ... those certain segments are generally the darker-hued members ...

Ms. Ruth had a different take on the life scene altogether ... her message was simply in the living. A revolutionary act for certain ... to go about your life a happy heart ... and what seemed to me, to have the ability to balance the bitter with sweet ...

Ms. Ruth was among a long line of firsts to come, and seemed quite surprised at the "ruckus" her life story has stirred. She addressed the issues we lesbians are afraid to discuss ... like perhaps we can still be sensual, sexual, and loving beings as we age, and certainly as long as we can develop and maintain good health practices. Her life could well be a template for the kind of activism that will need to take place. Around issues of aging, parenting, caregiving/caretaking. To remain active in one's community, to reach out and forge new friendships, learn new things, and develop new interests ... particularly, to build relationships with seniors/the elderly. *The Ruth Ellis Story* is an

absolute must for all of us to see. Her's is a life full of joy and accomplishment, flavored by satisfaction, as it should be lived.

Both women grasp the importance of building relationships across artificial obstacles that go in the guise of sexism, domestic violence, racism. Angela Davis called it building unlikely coalitions; urging the crowd to consider those folk who are incarcerated to be included in these dialogues.

By way of confession, I had to let a young brother pass myself and a companion as we walked to the lecture. It makes me nervous to have someone walk so closely behind me at night ... I apologized to him afterward, but he said he understood ... and by the same token, I couldn't stand this mangy guy trying to encroach on the space I was occupying with my friends. We had set up small chairs and had a bottle of water, and this guy kept inching forward. When it seemed his crotch was too close to my bud-die's head ... I stuck my foot out to effectively mark where we were sitting, and had to mention to him that he was just too close, and to please step back. I would hope that others like him would keep that attitude of entitlement to themselves. I don't care how much you idolize her.

I likely will need a series of articles to address the myriad of issues that have been named. Or, so it seems from where I sit, on the Black hand side.

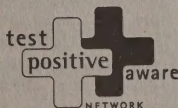
Friday, Oct. 8, there is a screening of Chicagoan Yvonne Welbon's film about Ruth Ellis, hosted by Women in the Director's Chair. The screening is followed by a panel of African-American lesbians on being "in the life" in Chicago from the 1930s to 1990s. The Oct. 8 event is 8 p.m., 941 W. Lawrence. The panel will be moderated by Welbon, and includes Stephanie Coleman, Vernita Gray, Donna Rose, Chris Smith and Donna Johnson, among others. Call (773) 773-907-0610 or wide@wide.org.



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Dave Adams Interview

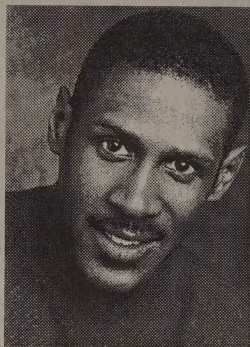
by Robert Schultz

David Adams was working out at a Bally's Health Club when he overheard conversation that the South Side-based ETA Creative Arts Foundation was opening its 29th season with Ed Bullins' *In the Wine Time*. David Adams, who plays Bama in the production (runs through Oct. 31, 773-752-3955), calls his participation a "chance of a lifetime." *In the Wine Time* premiered nearly 30 years ago and is one of the earlier of the more than 100 plays that the five-time Obie Award winner Ed Bullins has penned. Adams' Chicago debut in Bullins' play is a dream come true for this two-career gay man. David is an accountant and an actor. Harlem-born Adams grew up in Brooklyn during the era when Bullins would have four plays in production around New York. Bullins began writing plays in the mid 1960s to reach the Black masses on the theory that plays were more accessible than other types of literature.

Adams' Caribbean immigrant parents (his mother is from St. Croix and his father is from Cuba) told David that they sent him to school to be a professional and acting wasn't that type of work. David, who says he is looking at his 30s in a rear-view mirror, admits that such a mindset still influences him. It was a high school internship with Joseph Papp's Shakespeare in the Park in New York's Central Park that taught him that theater was more than getting a couple of actors together with a script and putting on a show. The festival's producer instilled in Adams the ethic that theater is a business where a work ethic allows one to succeed. In theater, Adams says, a work ethic means taking classes for skill development, showing up to the theater on time—"No one likes waiting on actors, especially other actors," and being courteous. Adams said such attitudes are important in an ensemble piece

like *In the Wine Time*.

David Adams describes Bullins' show as being about a loss of innocence. Although the setting is a northern industrial town in the 1950s, the play has a contemporary ring enhanced by Bullins' style of everyday common characters who are "slice of life." Contemporary themes such as domestic abuse and co-dependency are examined in the events of one night where the characters are faced with a crisis



David Adams

that changes their destructive thinking. At points, as eight people are on stage.

David plays Bama, a southern guy, a good ol' country boy who is caught up with the drinking wine hang-out crowd. David says, "Out of all the male characters, Bama is the only one that doesn't cuss. He is even-tempered." David goes on to explain that Bama is, "Just as pathetic as the other characters but not as grotesque or abusive as the other guys in the show." All the characters are vital to the story and Bama is easily swayed by them. David remarked, "I knew who this character is, finding him in me was the challenge. I knew how I wanted him to look."

To prepare for the role of Bama, Adams credits the director Charles Michael Moore for giving the cast samples of the music of the time, reminding them who was president, even providing instruction in some of the popular dances of the 1950s. Reflecting on his job, David affirms, "I like bringing characters to life. I like to entertain.

What I do is give it [characters] voice. I enjoy that a lot."

David plans to continue taking acting classes as he has in the past but now he's glad that he doesn't have to travel to the North Side to do so: ETA offers acting classes. David takes classes because, "No one actor knows everything. You always take classes to sharpen your craft. It's almost like a doctor. A doctor has to constantly take classes to stay on top of the game. Acting is the same thing. Acting is not an exact science like accounting. Accounting is an exact science: One and one will always equal two. Acting isn't like that, medicine isn't like that. It's a practice in its purest sense of the word." Employed full time as an accountant at a city agency over the last four years since he moved to Chicago, David has taken every opportunity to act or to study its craft except for a short period of time when he just concentrated on accounting. Acting is an activity where one can always jump in, he explained, and Chicago's scene is a little more sane than the 500 people per role auditions that are the norm in New York.

Among Adam's credits are appearances on the television shows *Early Edition*, *ER*, and *New York Undercover*.

Being an actor and an accountant isn't working at cross purposes, claimed David, who said he once tested evenly between being predominately right or left brained.

"My acting career is just another line of business. I'm the CEO, and CFO of David Adams, Inc. I handle everything like a business. I appreciate theater companies that handle the business side. No one who has made it has made it without being good businessmen. People like Wesley Snipes and Denzel Washington are businessmen before they are actors."

Adams wants everyone to know that the set designed for this production of *In the Wine Time* is worth the price of admission in itself and that any chance to see an Ed Bullins play is "worth it."

All Strayhorn concert set

by Robert Schultz

This is the centennial year of Duke Ellington's birth. In the middle of all the well-deserved hoopla celebrating the Duke, it's easy to forget that for 30 years Ellington's chief collaborator was the openly gay Billy Strayhorn. The Billy Strayhorn Orchestra, composed of 17 of Chicago's finest musicians led by pianist/arranger Gene Esposito, will provide a concert opportunity to be reminded of Strayhorn's contributions to the legacy at a concert at 8 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 15, at the Gateway Theater, 5216 W. Lawrence, (773) 549-3405, www.jazzidiom.com

The Strayhorn Orchestra's concert will be recorded live that evening for a future album. Jazz critic and author, Neil Tesser, will emcee the program. The all-Strayhorn concert will feature vintage and newly discovered Strayhorn compositions. Hollywood film producer Irwin Winkler, who bought the rights to David Hadju's award-winning biography of Strayhorn, are both expected to be in attendance. Jazz Idiom Ltd. is sponsoring the all-Strayhorn show.

The enigmatic relationship between the older Ellington and younger Strayhorn was revisited by Strayhorn biographer Hadju in a VANITY FAIR article published in May 1999. Prompted by the discovery of a bare-chested photograph of Strayhorn in the Duke's personal artifacts given by Duke's son Mercer to the Smithsonian Institution, the photo was found in a prayer book that Ellington always kept with him until his death. Whether or not the two musical partners ever made music in a more physical manner will never be settled, and is, perhaps, irrelevant. Suffice it to say that in intimacy of the 30 years on the road and the musical collaboration between two kindred artistic souls I'm sure that they didn't limit themselves to just shaking hands. In the end, we are left to enjoy some great music.



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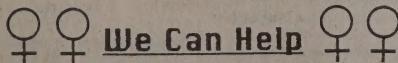
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HORIZONS COMMUNITY SERVICES
Chicago's Lesbian & Gay Community Center

CALENDAR

Wed., Sept. 29

African American Arts Alliance of

Chicago 2nd annual Black Arts of Chicago thru Oct. 4, (773) 779-5201.

Dyke March 2000 Kick-off planning meeting to mobilize for inclusive march in 2000. Lesbian Avengers are turning over planning and leadership roles to broader women's community. 6:30 p.m., 59 E. Van Buren, 14th floor, (773) 761-0791.

Northeastern University Award-winning author Jamaica Kincaid, free talk, 7:30 p.m., (773) 583-4050.

Seminary Co-Op Books and Harold Washington Library Luis Rodriguez, *It Doesn't Have to Be This Way: A Barrio Story*, 57th Street Books, 1301 E. 57th, (773) 684-1300.

Thursday, Sept. 30

Chicago Theater Trans star Lady Chablis attends the *Midnight in the Garden of Good & Evil* concert, 7:30 p.m., State St., (312) 902-1500. With Margaret Whiting, Kevin Mahogany, and more.

Columbia College Fashion: An Evening with Kenneth Cole at Marshall Fields, 6-9 p.m., Cole hosts a private evening to celebrate the opening of his new shop, Field's, 111 N. State, (312) 663-1124, \$250.

Voices of Cabrini: Remaking Chicago's Public Housing Documentary by lesbian filmmaker Ronit Bezalet on Cabrini housing changes, broadcast on WTTW/Channel 11, 11 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 1

Annual Brother-2-Brother Retreat "Living in the Spirit," through Oct. 3rd \$175. Molibu, Calib, (323) 964-7820.

Church of the Open Door As part of the Oct. 22 Coalition Against Police Brutality, a forum will be held 7 p.m., 5954 S. Albany. Discussion of police abuse as it relates to lesbian, gay, bi and trans people now and in the past. Speakers from October 22 group and Chicago Anti-Bashing Network. Call (773) 252-6019, (773) 528-1701.

Gerber/Hart Library Queer youth festival Oct. 1-3, free, 8 p.m., 1127 W. Granville, (773) 381-8030. *Boy Scenes* screened: *Alkalai, Iowa, A Friend of Dorothy, The Disco Years and Absolution of Athony.*

Women & Children First presents Barrie Jean Borich, *My Lesbian Husband* at 7:30pm. 5233 N. Clark (773) 769-9299. Chicago native Borich tells of the author's long-term relationship. She tells of discovering, through 12 years of devotion to the same sturdy woman, how much she delights in fidelity.

Saturday, Oct. 2

Adodi Chicago Meeting 2 p.m., M.O.I.P., 1346 S. Michigan, (312) 458-9584.

Aware Talk Radio Restoring Your Immune System. Oct. 2-3, on various radio stations, call (312) 541-TALK, 1-800-AID-AIDS.

City of Chicago Neighborhood Tours West Side, African-American and Italian American, (312) 742-1190.

Gerber/Hart Library Queer youth festival Oct. 1-3, free, 8 p.m., 1127 W. Granville, (773) 381-8030. *Girl Scenes* screened. Films by Catherine Crouch, Julia Zay, Irene

Gustafson, Sadie Bening. 10 p.m.: *Our Scenes: Opening Closer X, Queercore, Surviving Friendly Fire.*

Illinois Federation for Human Rights

"Statement for Freedom VI" annual benefit showcasing IL's best gay & lesbian performers at the Park West Theater. 6-10pm (773) 477-7173. MCs Byron Stewart and Jessica Allen. Performers Being Beautiful, Big Smith, Circuit Mom, Carqua/Rivera Art, Kenneth and Carl, Sapna Kumar, Paty, Elvis Band, Refus Profit & Pulsation. Park West, (773) 477-7173.

Ad Hoc Committee for a Show of

Support Rev. Greg Dell, suspended from the United Methodist Church for blessing gay unions, speaks on "Resisting Racism and Homophobia," at reception and dinner spon. by Ad Hoc Committee for a Show of Support. Proceeds benefit Men of All Colors Together/Chicago and In All Things Charity. 6 p.m., Ann Sather's, 929 W. Belmont, \$5 reception only, dinner \$45 with open bar, entertainment, dancing. (773) 549-7066.

Sunday, Oct. 3

Gerber/Hart Library Queer youth festival Oct. 1-3, free, 2 p.m., 1127 W. Granville, (773) 381-8030. *School Scenes*, co-spon. by GLSEN, *Conversion Piece*, My Very Own, *Afterschool School*, *School Fag*, *Lessons in Baby Dyke Theory*, *Trevor*.

Women & Children First presents Katherine V. Forrest, *Sleeping Bones: A Kate Delafield Mystery* at 5pm. 5233 N. Clark (773) 769-9299

Monday, Oct. 4

Chicago Gender Society Miss CGS Pageant, Baton Show, 8 p.m., special performers Gabrielle Giovante, Angelique Munro, Whitney Gannon. \$10 at the door.

Cocktail Outlines & LesbianGay Radio host Melissa Etheridge CD release party 8-11pm. Win copies of new CD "Breakdown", posters, singles and special surprises. See video "Angels Would Fall",

Tuesday, Oct. 5

Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce hosts "Why Pay Attention to My Books & the Bottom Line", Guest speaker Ann Christopherson of *Women & Children First* Held at 8 a.m., Ann Sather, 929 W. Belmont, includes sit-down breakfast. RSVP (773) 871-4190

Chicago International Film Fest 35th annual, films from round the world, thru Oct. 21, (312) 902-1500, (312) 425-9400, x 126.

Wednesday, Oct. 6

Horizons Community Services Real Chat Room series on lesbian/gay issues. "Hard Bodies & Plastic Pecs: What's on Average Guy to Do?" Men only 961 W. Montana, RSVP (773) 929-4357, 6-10 p.m.

Seminary Co-Op Books and Harold Washington Library renowned black feminist intellectual bell hooks discusses her new book for children, *Happy to Be Nappy*, 6 p.m., 400 S. State, (773) 684-1300.

Thursday, Oct. 7

Affinity Healthy Woman Nite, "Addictions

and Substance Abuse within the Lesbianay Community," with Dr. Hughes and Alicia Matthews PhD, 7 p.m., 5650 S. Woodlawn, (773) 324-0377, affinity95@aol.com

Crossroads Fund Dancin' With the Grass, annual gala benefit, Hot House, 31 E. Balbo, Ron Sable Awards, to Esther Nieves, Affinity and Funk Adult Group. Big Smith and Punt Adesti (773) 227-7676.

Gerber/Hart Library 4-week discussion based on Religion is a Queer Thing: A Guide to the Christian Faith for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Persons (ed. by Elizabeth Stuart). Led by Rev. Kelly Sprinkle, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, and Rev. Jacki Belle, pastor of Phoenix Community Church in Kalamazoo. Oct. 7-28, 7 p., 1127 Granville, (773) 381-8030.

Oak Park Area Gay and Lesbian Assn. and Prism Steering Committee, announce re-opening a Prism Youth Program, a non-therapeutic program for 14-17 year old GLBT/questioning youth. Grand opening 6:30 p.m., 1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, (708) FUN-FIND.

Friday, Oct. 8

5th Women Writers Conference featuring Ana Castillo & lesbian writer Dorothy Allison at Roosevelt University, 7 p.m., 430 S. Michigan (773) 296-1108 ext. 18. Also Oct. 9. Ana and Dorothy read together for the first time, Friday, 10, Fine Arts, 410 S. Michigan. Saturday conference is at Roosevelt, 4:30 S. Michigan. Sunday is at Roosevelt. Sponsored by Guild Complex.

Chicago Anti-Bashing Network March & Rally on one-year anniversary of Matthew Shepard murder to protest anti-gay hate at 8pm on corner of Halsted & Roscoe streets. More info call at (773) 878-4781.

Speakers include Dorothy Haydis (mother of slain sailor Allan Schindler), and recent bashing victim Ryan Lido. Huge rally to remember Shepard, Billy Gaitner, more.

Onyx Men's leather club hosts 4th anniversary weekend of events for Blackout 1999, Oct. 8-10. Friday opening at Clublock Saturday during the day and night at Clublock. Sunday is banquet 3-6 p.m., Star Gaze, 5419 N. Clark. The Sunday night dance is at Numbers, 6408 N. Clark, 9 p.m. ill closing. DJ Freddie Bain, guests dancers including Marcus.

www.onyxmen.com, portion benefits ONYXCares. (312) 329-6141.

Women in the Director's Chair Special screening, *Living With Pride: Ruth Ellis at 100*, plus a panel of African-American lesbians on being "in the life" in Chicago from 1930s to 1990s. Lesbian filmmaker Yvonne Welbon will participate, 7 p.m., 100, 941 W. Lawrence. (773) 907-0610. Panel: Welbon, Stephanie Coleman, Vernita Gray, Donna Rose, Chris Smith and Donna Johnson, among others. Ruth Ellis is a 100-year-old black lesbian, originally from Illinois, now living in Detroit.

Saturday, Oct. 9

5th Women Writers Conference featuring Ana Castillo & lesbian writer Dorothy Allison at Roosevelt University, 430 S. Michigan (773) 296-1108 ext. 18. Today: 10:30 a.m., lecture by Dorothy Allison, with Q&A: 1:15 p.m., interview with

Castillo, Q&A to follow. 3 p.m. Workshop on women's bodies, with Sharon Powell. 3 p.m., writing and publishing in the information age (moderator Karen Lee Osborne). 3 p.m., panel discussion on writing inside and outside identity (with panelists Joriet Harper, Effie Mihopoulos, Brenda Cardenas, Duriel Harris, Emily Hooper Lonsdale). By The Guild Complex.

Ambiente Pa'lante! presents Hispanic Heritage/Queer History Month celebration. Humboldt Park Library, 1605 N. Troy (Near North & Kedzie), 1:30-4:30 p.m. Panel on history of organizing queer Latinos/as in Chicago. Reps from groups and individuals. FREE. (773) 278-8563.

Aware Talk Radio Top Tips to Fighting the Flu, Oct. 9-10, (312) 541-TALK.

Mountain Moving Coffeehouse Ha-Ha Institute Comedy Theatre presents Karen Williams performing poetic comedy, *Essentially ... One Woman's Performance*, 7:30pm, 1650 W. Foster, Ebenezer Lutheran Church (312) 409-0276.

The Rails "SALVATION," at Mint, 10 p., 820 W. Lake, (312) 492-6468, release party for Whazzup magazine, record release and live performance by The Jasper Street Company, DJ Spen and Karizma, performance by Kive Ire. Also (708) 802-1705.

Women & HIV National Conference L.A. Convention Center, thru Oct. 12, (213) 486-6560, www.womenandhiv99.com

Sunday, October 10

Girlbar Gay and lesbian "Steppers" set featuring "old school/dusties," and "new school" music, by Jennifer and Olio Entertainment, 7:30-11 p.m., \$3, 2625 N. Halsted, (773) 463-0313.

Onyx Leather men party, at Numbers, 6406 N. Clark, 9 p.m., patio and pit open all night, DJ Freddie Bain, guest dancers including Marcus. (312) 329-6141. Portion benefits ONYXCares.

Monday, Oct. 11

Horizons Community Services Annual meeting, elections, (773) 472-6469.

Sister Jeannine Gramick Special guest speaker, prohibited in July from performing pastoral work with lesbian and gay people, to speak at DePaul University, 7 p.m., 2320 N. Kenmore, room 154, (312) 362-5896.

Steppenwolf Theatre TRAFFIC series T Bone Burnett and Sam Phillips open 4th season of this series, 7:30 p.m., 1650 N. Halsted, (312) 335-1650.

Wed., Oct. 13

Horizons Community Services Real Chat Room "Mixing It Up: Is Life Richer with More Diverse Friendships?" 961 W. Montana, RSVP (773) 929-4357, 6-10 p.m. Program 2 hours.

Oak Park Public Library Lesbian historian Marie Kuda does a program on "Chicago's Gay and Lesbian History: From

more detailed calendar listings in Nightlines, and online www.outlineschicago.com

the Fire to the Flood," for GLBT History Month, 834 W. Lake St., Veteran's Room, 7 p.m., in Oak Park.

Thursday, Oct. 14

Affinity and Adodi

"Brothers Meet Sisters," Lez Chat, for men and women, 7-9 p.m., 5650 S. Woodlawn, (773) 324-0377.

Center for Gender

Studios U. of Chicago

International conference on "Politics, Rights & Representation," achieving equality across the lines of gender, race and sexuality in the U.S., France, and South Africa. (773) 702-9936. Judd Hall, 4835 S. Kimbark. Free. Oct. 14, 7 p.m.: Assessing the Categories: Should Political Representation be Organized by Race, Gender or Sexuality, MANY more programs, call for info.

Friday, Oct. 15

Jazz Idiom Bill Strayhorn

Orchestra All-Strayhorn program, vintage and newly discovered music by this great gay composer, 8 p.m., Gateway Th., 5216 W. Lawrence. Strayhorn was Duke Ellington's chief arranger and collaborator for nearly 30 years. (773) 777-3796.

Whole Life Expo &

Conference 100 speakers, Deepak Chopra, Marianne Williamson, Wayne Dyer, Barbara de Angelis, Stuart Wilde, Dannion Brinkley, 200 exhibits, alternative therapies and products, Oct. 16: 17 at the Rosemont Convention Center. Call (800) 551-3976.

Saturday, Oct. 16

Affinity 40 Plus "I'm not your Sister, I'm your Lover," 4 p.m., 5650 S. Woodlawn, (773) 324-0377.

Aware Talk Radio A

Woman's Guide to Preventing Breast Cancer, Oct. 16-17, (312) 541-TALK.

GLSEN Youth summit (773) 769-9009

Gerber/Hart Library and Test Positive Aware

Network Big Al's Speakeasy benefit, at Knickerbocker Hotel Crystal Ballroom, with a 1920s style gambling theme casino benefit. 8-midnite, 163 E. Walton, \$65-\$500.

Gamblers receive a dinner buffet, dancing to big band music, entertainment, cash bar, \$75 in chips, and more. Call (773) 583-1059.

Howard Brown Health Center 25th Anniversary

Dinner & Silent Auction, (773) 388-8997.

Tuesday, Oct. 19

South Suburban Sisters meeting in Orland Park, 3-5 p.m., (708) 460-8025.

Wednesday, Oct. 20

Lambda Legal Defense Bon Foster Civil Rights

Lecture at the Palmer House Hilton. Billie Jean King as keynote speaker. VIP 11 a.m., luncheon noon. call (312) 663-4413.

Oak Park Public Library

Lesbian historian Marie Kuda does a program on "Lesbians in Literature," for GLBT History Month, 834 W. Lake St., Veteran's Room, 7 p.m., in Oak Park.

Thursday, Oct. 21

Gwendolyn Brooks 9th

Annual Writers Conference: **Black Writers Approaching the Millennium** Black Literature and Creative Writing thru Oct. 23 w/keynote speaker Dr. Maya Angelou at Chicago State University. For more info call (773) 995-4440

Friday, Oct. 22

Coalition of Black In-

structors Final part of 1999 Road to Prosperity Tour Oct. 22-23; 1-888-411-2624.

Howard Brown Health

Center Counseling & Psychotherapy prof seminar: "Approaching the Millennium: Rethinking the Impact of HIV/AIDS," 2-4p, \$20 (\$10st) @ 4025 N Sheridan. Jan (773) 388-8904.

Saturday, Oct. 23

Aware Talk Radio The African-American Community & AIDS: The Crisis Within, Oct. 23-24, Oct. 30-31, (312) 541-TALK.

Sunday, Oct. 24

St. Luke's Place Ellen Meyers receives the Good Samaritan Award. 6 p.m., Martinique Banquet, 2500 W. 95th St., Evergreen Park. A project of United Methodist Church, this group provides housing of African-American people with AIDS on the South Side. (773) 928-2036.

Tuesday, Oct. 26

City of Chicago Gay & Lesbian Hall of Fame

1999 Award Presentation 5:30pm Chicago Cultural Center, Randolph & Michigan (312) 744-7911. www.GLHallOfFame.org

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THEATRE

Previews/Opening Nights

**** Sept 29: **Visiting Mr. Green**, by gay playwright Jeff Baran. Aging secluded Jewish widower is hit by a car. Reckless driver, a young executive, is sentenced to six months of weekly visits with Mr. Green. Thru Oct 31. Northlight 847 679-9501

Oct 8: Career Achievement Award presentation to actor Morgan Freeman, during 35th Chicago International Film Festival at a reception in his honor at The Black Or child classic night club, 230 W North. Tix: Film Fest 312 782-9768 or Carson Pirie Scott, Dominick's, Tower, Hot Tix or Ticketmaster

Oct 10: Jane: Abortion and the Underground Benefit performance features founder Heather Booth, now a respected labor organizer, members who were arrested in the 1973 raid on the service and the only black member, Marie Leaner, now a community organizer, a former client. **Jane** was the underground abortion service run by Hyde Park women from 1969 to 1973. Chopin Th, 1543 W Division Thru Oct 12. 773 334-6032

**** **Oct 22: Big Dicks on Stage** In Steven Dawson's new comedy, Daniel is a playwright with a message. He wants to write serious drama about middle aged gay men, who have deep feelings and desires. But to get produced, he is asked by director and producer to make changes which they know the gay community will support. Bailiwick 773 883-1090

Oct 22: Driving Miss Daisy Alfred Uhry's Pulitzer Prize winning story of a black chauffeur, southern white lady who become close friends as they age, thru Nov 21. Village Players Theatre 708 222-0369

Oct 22: Stamp thru Oct 24 Paramount Arts Center 630 896-6666

Oct 29: Smokey Joe's Cafe works of legendary song-writing duo Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller ("Hound Dog," "Love Potion #9," "Yakety Yak" and "Jailhouse Rock") 8pm Paramount Arts Cntr 630 896-6666

In Performance

**** **Dancer from the Dance** written and directed by Eric Rosen, based on acclaimed gay novel by Andrew Holleran. About Face Th, Jane Addams City Hall House 3212 N Broadway 773 549-7943

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf A woman's view of women of her race facing everything from rape to unrequited love with more courage than sorrow. Chicago Cultural Thru Oct 24. 312 494-5720

In the Wine Time One night is a lifetime for a group faced with a crisis which changes their destructive thinking. Deals with black urban scene, black male and his triumphs and struggles in urban America. ETA Creative Arts foundation, ETA Sq, 7558 S. South Chicago Ave. Thru Oct 31. 773 752-3955

The Journal of Ordinary Thought Neighborhood residents gather to relate/perform their personal stories, a compilation of reflections people make on personal experience, a moving social commentary about many of America's poor communities. Result of writing workshops

sponsored by Neighborhood Writing Alliance held in public housing projects, libraries, schools, community centers. Thru Oct 24 Chicago Th Co, Parkway Playhouse, 500 E. 67th St 773 493-5360

Mahalia, The Life Story of Mahalia Jackson includes 18 songs made famous by the Queen of Gospel. Stars Latonya Beacham, a visual replica with a great voice. Black Ensemble Th, 4520 N Beacon. Thru Oct 24. 773 769-4451

**** **Raised in Captivity** by Nicky Silver. A gay writer in his 30s, emotionally empty since the death of his lover, develops a relationship with a murderer on Death Row. Cobalt Ensemble Th, Thru Oct 24, Chicago Dramatists 312 458-9182

The State of Mississippi vs. Emmett Till True story of a 14 year old African-American from Chicago, discovered floating in a Mississippi river in 1955, beaten, mutilated, the victim of a hate crime because he supposedly directed a wolf whistle at a white woman. Pegasus Players, Truman College's O'Rourke Ctr., thru Oct 17, 773 878-9761

DANCE

Oct 7: Jump Rhythm Jazz jazz, Latin music and the blues, to include *Romance in Swingtime*, classic duet featuring artistic director Billy Siegfend and accompanied by the Jump Rhythm Jazz Trio. Thru Oct 9 at the Dance Center Columbia College 773 989-3310

Oct 8: Robin Lakes/Rough Dance I Dance the 'Body Eclectic Northwestern U. Thru Oct 10. 1979 S. Campus Dr Evanston IL 847 491-7282

Oct 29: 9th DanceAfrica Chicago Festival Sankofa: Looking Back to go Forward honors elders in all communities and encourages youth as we go into the next millennium. Internationally renowned artists: Les Ballet Africains; National Dance company of the Republic of Guinea; the Nile Ethiopian Ensemble and Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago with guest Norma Miller, the legendary Queen of Swing. Month long festival culminating in dynamic performances Oct 29-31. Auditorium [312] 663-1600

ART/PHOTO

African American Cultural Ctr Henry Jones On the Edge, 312 996-9549

Art Institute of Chicago Terrain of Freedom: American Art and the Civil War highlights John Quincy Adams Ward's sculpture *The Freedman*, with strong images of African American slaves and freedmen in Civil War-era society; and Albert Bierstadt's painting *Mountain Brook*. Call for lectures and performances, exhibit runs thru Nov. 28. Ward said of his own sculpture, considered to be the first realistic representation of an African American to have been cast in bronze, that the African American depicted was understood to be a fugitive slave who had broken his own shackles, left his plantation, and fled northward to seek freedom within the ranks of the Union Army. At the same time this

sculpture was on exhibit, the federal government issued official orders calling for the enlistment of African Americans into the Union Army to fight as soldiers.

**** **Chicago Cultural Ctr** Fictional adventures of an African-American woman in Paris, living as an artist and model in the heyday of Picasso, Matisse, and Gertrude Stein are the subject of Faith Ringgold's celebrated series of story quilts, *Dancing at the Louvre: French Collection and Other Story Quilts*, thru Oct 10. *EMBODYdisembody* brings together seven photographic/installation artists whose works center on art, science, the body, thru Oct 3. *Cows on Parade* life size fiberglass bovines by hundreds of local artists, not in the Ctr but in public spaces, buildings, thru Oct 31. Chicago Cultural Ctr, 312 744-6630 or recording 312 346-3278

The Dusable Museum of African American History Harold Washington In Office, permanent exhibition, w/ composite office setting; memorabilia; personal, career effects. 740 E 56th Place 57th, Cottage Grove Ave, Washington Park. Call about Dusable After Dark, monthly networking affair with cultural appeal. Sundays are free. 773 947-0600

Peace Museum Women's Peace Initiatives: Transforming Communities historic links



Ward's *The Freedman*.

between women's equality movement and movements against wars, nuclear weapons, racial discrimination and inequality.

Honoring organizations that transform local, national, global communities thru non-violent means. Highlights Rigoberta Menchu, Aung San Suu Kyi, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, Gwendolyn Brooks and Chicagoan Jane Addams, Ida B. Wells plus less famous women whose work goes unmentioned in history books. Thru Nov 23. Peace Museum, 314 W Institute Place, 6:30pm. 312 440-1860

**** **Vedanta Gallery** *Funtine Ken and Friends* gay New York artist Steve DeFrank explores his sexuality thru large illuminated portraits of America's alternative sweet-heart, the vintage Ken doll, using about 30,000 disco painted Lite-Brite pegs, from the familiar child glowing sketchpad, in each portrait to create a luminous monarch

of a boyhood closeted crush with painstaking obsessiveness. Includes Brad (Black Ken), and Funtine Ken, the cowboy. Thru Oct 23. 110 N Peoria, 312 432-0708

Woman Made Gallery Also Chicago in Glass, special preview of new art by Judy Chicago executed in gloss by Vicki Dean, Oct 2 thru Oct 13. 312 328-0038 or preview at www.womanmade.org. Keith Mansion of Jay Darrow 1900 S Prairie 312 328-0038

Wood Street Gallery Indoor/Outdoor 2D/3d new sculpture garden work by Eric Nordgulgen, John Van Alstine, and Zeldia Werner (in memoriam). 1239 N. Wood St. 773 227-3306

NOTICES

ETA Creative Arts Foundation seeks playwrights who want their works produced by an outstanding African American theater thru a collaborative process, the Playwright Discovery/Development Initiative. Not a contest. Historically the African American community has hungered for live, authentic, uplifting and entertainment presentation of itself. But few writers have the institutional support they need and the ETA has existed since 71 for that reason. Send scripts by Oct 31, call 773 752-8727 for info

**** **Heratica 7** accepting women-authored and focused, arousing and unpredictable erotica submissions. Multicultural focus: Has your cultural background affected your sex life? Have you been involved with someone of another race/culture? Issues, learning, solutions. Deadline Dec 15, typed, double-sp, w/ name, add and phone, SASE, to Down There Press ATT: HER, 938 Howard St. #101, San Francisco, CA 94103.

**** **Poetic Healings** Bi women and lesbian of color submit healing poetry mainly about abuse, bi-phobia, breast cancer, chemical dependency, HIV/AIDS, lesbian-phobia, racism and sexism. A poetry health video and a self-help treasure are being compiled. Send a max 3 original and unpublished poems by Oct 1 deadline to Chirwe Odeluga, 1941 Gaston Place Drive #328, Austin, TX 78723 or chirweodeluga@hotmail.com. A Teatro Humanidad sponsored project.

**** **Grants for Lesbian, gay, bi and trans film and video makers** sought by Frameline for the 1999 Tazabaco/Frameline Film&Video completion Fund. Grants from \$500 to \$3,000 are available for projects in the final stages of production. Deadline Oct 15. 415 703-8660 or www.frameline.org

**** **Very Queer Reruns: Boob Tube Fantasies** seeking submissions for a collection of erotic fiction inspired by TV shows ewe grew up viewing in our own queer way. All queer persuasions welcome. 20 page max. Chris Strickling/Mary Grover PO Box 222, Austin TX 78767-0222

Reva Thomas, a Ph.D. student at California School of Professional Psychology in Alameda CA writing Ph.D. dissertation on psycho-social development of African American women, in particular teen mothers, received AFDC, earned professional degrees and have professional careers. Contact Reva@aol.com, or just pass this along. Theresa M. Tensuam, Dept of English, 302 Woodside Cottage, Haverford College, Haverford PA 19041, 610 896-1268

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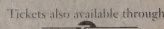
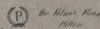
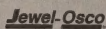
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Hail, Mary

by **Marvin Patterson**

You have only sensed this Mary. When she sings, a collection plate should be passed around; tithes seem due. Choruses sung by the Pentecostal daughter became anthems. She carries truth like a wand; respect like a shield. She seeks love, speaks prophecy. "Looking in the mirror nowadays is more than just looking at me. It's looking at the depths of me," she says. Herewith her most musical album; her most soulful reflection: *Mary*, everlasting. It hasn't always been this way. Certain things about **Mary Jane Blige** you just can't shake. *What's the 411* presented a shy, combat-booted, tough love Yonkers queen straight out of the Slow Bomb projects. *My Life's* Mary was forsaken, struggling with tensions between the sacred and the secular, breaking mountaintop truths over heads like golden calves. *Share My World* was an independent, brave step toward the day of reckoning. But let Mary tell it, her's isn't so much a struggle as a journey. "I was crying out for help during the *My Life* album," she confesses. "If you listen to the song 'Happy' I was like, Please somebody come save me. Even by the time *Share My World* came, I was still trying to find my way."

All the multi-platinum sales, accolades and awards in the world did matter. That was the problem; they were of the world. Life has been difficult these couple years, she'll tell you. But the point is not in her deep-set scars, it's in her healing. And Mary is getting stronger—rising—every day. "This making of this album was unbelievable," Mary says. "All I saw was love; I don't normally see that. No problems, no nonsense in the studio. It was 'You coming right or you not comin' in here!'" A sampling of

those who made it through: Elton John, Lauryn Hill, Chuck Thompson, DMX, Aretha Franklin, Babyface, Eric Clapton, K-Ci Hailey, Nas. Mary co-wrote 90% of the album, which she approached for a 1970s, early 1980s feel.

Mary, the album, is about what's happening in her life now. "You know the feeling you get listening to Stevie Wonder's *Songs In the Key of Life*?" she asks. "That's the feeling I needed to hear from this album. And I definitely think we got it."

Mary



Mary is a fluid venture from its first single, "All That I Can Say," featuring Lauryn Hill's signature old-school, doo-wop production and simply pretty background vocals. It's a slow, lucid swing and one of Lauryn's best production efforts, *Miseducation* included. "That's what I love about Lauryn," says Mary. "I don't think any other artist would have done that for me. When she looks at me, it's not with eyes of envy." Rather, there's a respectful, female intimacy, evident throughout the airy, snaking song. The most chilling moment is when Mary and Lauryn get to the other side of the bridge (Lauryn is known for building a sturdy bridge) and out comes a convert wail: Mary's heaaaaarrrree! Actually, much of Mary will make you tremble and rock. "Beautiful One" is a delicate, deeply rooted song that reunites Mary with Chucky Thompson who pro-

duced most of *My Life*. The track's phrasing is more profound than complex; the arrangement, angelic. It's also Mary Jane Blige's favorite song on the album. "Oh my God, I feel crazy on the inside when I hear it, like heaven was running through me. A message has been given to me," she says. "I just want to cry. I can picture my wedding through this song, but when I sing, 'You are my love, you are my diamond, you are my flower, you are my life, you are everything to me,' I'm saying that the beautiful one is you." Perhaps Mary's most intriguing track is "Not Lookin'." Originally the song was to be a duet with R&B artist Joe, then Eric from Blackstreet. But the only man who could stand up vocally to Mary was K-Ci Hailey, one of her greatest tests and teachers. They haven't dueted since

What's the 411's "I Don't Want To Do Anything." As ever, Mary is honest about their six-year reunion. "When my manager suggested K-Ci, at first I was like, 'Hell No! None of that,'" she said, recalling their intense relationship and subsequent breakup. "But I thought about it and said, 'Know what? The boy can sing.'" "Don't Waste Your Time" features Mary with Aretha Franklin; a formidable pair. "That just takes courage in itself," Mary laughs, "walking in a studio with a woman who's been in our hearts and our homes and our lives forever? Since we can remember? There's nothing but love for her. There was a point where she said, 'You think you look like me?' I got real scared and said, 'No.' She said, 'I think you look like me.'" The gentle sentiment made Mary's mother cry. "I'm just really concerned about the hip-hop/R&B audi-

ence—the audience that made me," she continues. "All the people in the projects that get a welfare check every month and go buy (my) *Mary* album. I didn't put Eric Clapton, who is very soulful on his guitar, and Elton John, who was at one time a big part of Black music, on my album because I want to crossover. I put them on *Mary* because I like what they do." And there is no more holding herself back, no more fear. She is handling everything around her differently. Out with constructive criticism. "I don't give a damn what people think anymore. I'm not afraid. I got things in me that I learned when I was a little girl; now that I'm free, all of that is coming back. And I have so much more."

Moving on to other news: **Mr. Eric Benet** was the blind date who performed at the Miller Genuine Afters, along with **The Roots** and **Busta Rhymes**. Benet, who did an outstanding performance, says he's blessed that his album has gone platinum. "(I) think this album, has given me the exposure to people who didn't know who I was." It has finally been confirmed that he and Halle Berry are an item. Asked if he foresees wedding bells, he responded, "Halle and I are enjoying each other's company," and it's for him to know, and his fans to find out.

Beyoncé of the quartet group **Destiny's Child** said the group is very close and they hope this album is as successful as the first one. Maxwell, who recently took the Windy City by storm, says that he is very surprised at how many female fans he has. "In high school, I didn't date much, didn't have that many girl friends," he said. Maxwell went on to say that he's also surprised at how many compliments he receives from his male audience.

[In Sept., in Atlanta, 97.5 morning DJ Ryan Cameron reportedly outed Maxwell as gay. The DJ alleges that Maxwell announced this thru his publicist. Caller's reactions varied from extreme upset to praise. This came via the internet—take it for what it is, a rumor right now.]

flow ~ notes from the BLACKLINES Music Department

Hear Again

by Jano

How I feel is how I listen.

Today, I feel blah. I need to remember why I am here. I will go to the *medicine cabinet* to see if there is anything there to make me feel better. I will select the **Kenny Loggins** CD, *Unimaginable Life*. This starts off with a prayer, setting a new age tone but soon moves into grooves like, *Now That I Know Love*, worthy of stepping to. The lyrics on various songs will kidnap me from the pity party I am having and put me face to face with my own power.

Then I'll hear the **Yellow Jackets** CD, *Dreamland*. This will inspire me to get up and take action without interrupting my thoughts. It won't demand my attention by asking me to skip one tune for the next. The Bobby McFerrin vocal on the second track, "Summer Song," settles in and keeps me company. *Dreamland* is so smooth that it can repeat itself several times before I notice.

Now, I want some conversation. I'll cue up **Etta James**, *Life, Love, and the Blues*. Although I realize you sometimes must have an open mind when you listen to music out of your regular genre, this CD was almost returned to the store after I first listened to it. Now, every time I hear, "Born Under a Bad Sign" or the cover of the late Johnny 'Guitar' Watson's, "I Want To Ta Ta You," I grin from ear to ear. Her delivery of the blues make me feel like I'm eavesdropping on some juicy, small-town gossip.

I am beginning to feel better. **Earth, Wind and Fire's**, *That's The Way Of The World*, title track gets my attention and gives me hope. This music reaches into the memory of my youth and illuminates a future that is always possible. "Shining Star" is exciting, catchy and believable, "You're a shining star no matter who you are ..."

Since I'm feeling lighter now, I'll go for high drama with **Kathleen Battle Sings Mozart**. "Vorrei Spiegarti, Oh Dio!" (don't worry, I can't pronounce it either), reminds me of funny-faced divas I've seen on public television dramatically rolling their eyes and snapping their words. I will sway to and fro, pretending I know all of the words to this sad love song. (The translation is included in the album notes.) It is the drama of it all that will lighten my heart and the beauty of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with Andre Previn that will connect me with the longest rays of the sun. Ah, I feel better now.

Underground Techniques

by DJ Harry T

Ralphie Rosario - 45 Miles of Nerves

Chicago House music veteran and legend Ralphie Rosario released his long-awaited album, *45 Miles of Nerves* on UC Music/Afterhours. This DJ, songwriter and producer whose remixes of artists (Gloria Estefan, Barrio Boyz and Deee-lite) have been blessed by his skillful hands, showcases those talents and local artists as well.

From the opening track, *45 Miles* begins the journey for the road, with explorative drum and bass beats and trip-hop savy, all accompanied with the vocals of Byrd Bardot, Vaughan Palelei and Collette Marino. Although the album does include the No. 1 Billboard smash, "Take Me Up (Gotta Get Up)," featuring the vocals of Donna Blakely, it does include new tracks including "Mello ... But Yet Tawnting," "I Want Everything Back!," and "Don't Throw Our Love Away," featuring Kellee Warren. (Where you been hiding, gal?)

My favorites have been his collaboration with the legendary Linda Clifford on "Wanna Give It Up," a remake of The Ritchie Family classic, "Give Me A Break,"

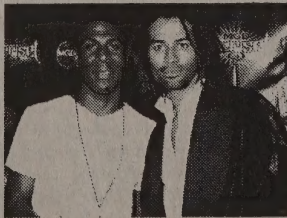
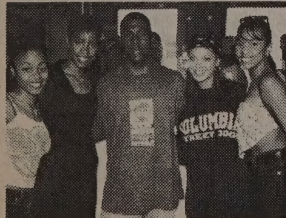
and "Salsation," featuring a dynamic performance by his brother, Issac Rosario on saxophone. Being a DJ myself, Ralphie has been an inspiration to me as an artist, a friend and his innovative mixing skills. For those who had doubt about this man, check your ego at the door. There's room for everyone in this business. Like a bridge, if you build it, people will come. Ralphie, thank you for allowing us to experience your *45 Miles* and keep the road open for those who want to travel right with you.

Celeda - This Is It

Having burst onto the scene with her singles, "Get It Together" and "Messin' With My Mind" along with the Heavy Hitters, Celeda has been busy crafting her work and now the wait is over. *This Is It* (Twisted), the full-length album, explores many different musical styles collaborating with many different producers such as Cevin Fisher and Maurice Joshua. Beginning with the opening track, "Burnin' Up," Celeda sets the stage for a musical journey with great lyrical songwriting, focusing on positive messages which is sometimes overlooked with her gospel-influenced vocals.

Her sermon begins with words of encouragement, in which she focuses on self-empowerment. Listening to "Try Again" and "Happy," she spreads her message of self-love and self-respect, singing "When you fall, sugar don't fall apart. There is no such word as can't." With "Be Yourself," she sings with conviction on loving who you are and doing what pleases self and not to please someone else.

Of course, the club favorite, "Music is the Answer (Dancin' & Prancin')" is included, along with other great vibes. Celeda even lets her hair down with a funky drummer groove on "Beat Me Down." Overall, this is a great beginning for a Chicago diva gal.



Some pics to go with Marvin's column this month on music industry people. LEFT: Marvin with Destiny's Child. MIDDLE: Marvin with Eric Benet. RIGHT: Maxwell (front, center) with members of the Mod Squad on V-103 and Maxwell's v.p. of publicity Cynthia Johnson. Photos by Raymond Boyd and Jennifer Williams

The ONYX Blackout Anniversary Weekend 99

by Sherri Jackson

I was asked sometime ago to interview the president of Onyx/Chicago Leather Men's Organization. I thought this could be a learning experience and fun. I could admit some of my own prejudices, and dismantle some of the myths about the Black leather community. I also thought I probably would find out that my fetishes may not be any different than those of the Leather community. I just think they are possibly more open and more comfortable than a lot of us are willing to admit when it comes to sexuality.

I decided to meet with Steve Balious, who is the president of ONYX Leathermen. We had a nice lunch and talk. Steve has a warm smile and is very easy to speak with. I also noticed he is very comfortable with both his masculine and feminine sides. Now, I can respect that in a man. Steve told me about ONYX, The Blackout weekend Oct. 8-10, and the direction ONYX would like to see itself in the future. I wanted to know more about ONYX PEARLS, the Leather Women's group. Steve is also one of the five founding members of ONYX, a 50-member organization nationally. This Blackout Celebration will be their 4th anniversary celebration. Most of the ONYX members are very active in the community. They have a history with Minority Intervention Outreach Project and Brother to Brother C.A.N. — a support group for men of color out of Harambe Wellness Center in Hyde Park. ONYX also was a supporter of the first Chicago Black Gay Pride.

Sherri: Tell me about the Blackout Celebration Weekend?

Steve: It starts Friday, Oct. 8. We have a Welcome Reception and Registration at the Cell Block 8-10 p.m. On Saturday we continue with a brunch, and a leather swap. Here you can buy tapes, leather goods, and magazines. This is a nice way to trade

your items and shop as well. We also will have a dinner Saturday night. We also have an annual general meeting for our members from out of town.. It's a kind of State of the Union Address. Here we discuss what it is like to be in this life a minority within a minority. We are a triple threat because we are Black, gay, and kinky [he says with a chuckle and a big smile].

Sherri: What are the differences between the Black Leather community and the White Leather community?

Steve: They are obvious, in S&M people think that means Slave and Master. It means Sadomasochism. As Black people we have a strange history with that whole Slave and Master thing. The cultural differences require special needs. We have to identify that for ourselves. We are not interested in the traditional roles of Slave and Master. I do think that passions are the same. We just have to get rid of all the stigmas and stereotypes and destroy that.

Sherri: I noticed while in Atlanta recently and even here in Chicago I always seem to see men. Where are the Black Leather women and does ONYX have a group for women?

Steve: We are trying to support the Black Pearls, the women's group. We really want the women to do this for themselves. We are just supporters. We as men understand we have a responsibility to be a big brother to our sisters. We also know as men the women will remind us to be good sons [said with a smile]. We want to embrace those relationships within the women's community. We want to teach them, but they also teach us and we must nurture each other.

Sherri: How can I become involved with ONYX? Steve, I may not attend events with ONYX because I feel I will be looked at weird if I don't arrive in my leather wear, or maybe

because I don't know enough about that lifestyle. I do like to see a woman in Leather, but then again I like a woman in mostly anything [laughter]. So does that make me a Leather girl?

Sherri: The easiest way to become involved is by checking out the Blackout Weekend Events. We also meet at the Cell Block the 3rd Sunday of every month. Sherri, you don't have to embrace any particular fetish. There are all kinds of fetishes out there and available. We do not recommend any one over the other. What we recommend is that you explore the fullness of your sexuality. I was told the ONYX Pearls members are introduced to each other, and then become involved with the group this way. They are not as visible as the men, but hopefully that will change in the future. They usually pair up and hang out after meeting each other.

Sherri: Is being into the Leather thing about S&M?

Steve: People are sometimes into leather for leather's sake. I like it for the masculinity of it. You feel good, attractive, and sexy. It's a cultural thing of being honest about my sexuality as a sexual being, and the rest of the world. Terms are used and negotiated during the play. The hard-core scene is called edge play where you take it to the limit. It needs to be a safe zone, with buzz words used. The buzz words Safe, Sane, and Consensual. You must take responsibility so no one gets hurt. [Steve's favorite word is 'home' because he identifies this as a safe place.]

Sherri: What direction would ONYX like to be heading in the future?

Steve: I would like to see ONYX continue what we have been doing. I am happy with that. I would like to see us be inclusive, a space to welcome others. I would like to see other minorities get involved with the leather community. I would like to see us embrace the fullness of our sexuality. This comes from our upbringing of sex and with each other in our relationships,

how we even interact. I would like to see us continue to destroy the myths involved in S&M and the leather community. In the future we are hoping to have chapters in other states maybe. We will not start another ONYX, but we would like to see chapters elsewhere. We are also going to work more on cultural differences. In the Black community there are so many myths we need to overcome still so we can be comfortable who we are. As Black people we are beautiful, sexual beings. We should not be afraid to embrace this about ourselves. Sometimes we want to do everything behind closed doors with the lights out. We should have no shame about who we are and what we like. We need to embrace our sexual side the same way we embrace the rest of ourselves in PRIDE.

Sherri: I thank you for the time out of your busy schedule. Is there a way I or the public can contact ONYX or find out more about the Blackout Weekend?

Steve: You can visit our website at www.onyxmen.com, or write us at Onyx, 1340 W. Irving Park Road, Suite 188. Chicago, Ill.

A portion of the proceeds from the Blackout Weekend supports various people of color, the leather community, and certain HIV/AIDS related charities.

Steve said, "Leather people do not have sex any more than the rest of the community. I just thought you might want to know this, Sherri."

I found the interview with Steve to be informative and fun, just like I expected. I even told Steve I might go to the big dinner they have on Saturday evening. Most of all I learned that in addition to the fact that these men and women are open about their sexuality, they are also giving back to their community in a good way. I hope you all check out Blackout Weekend, or attend an ONYX meeting, and get to know the brothers and sisters in the community. You know that as a community we sometimes do not like to talk about or associate with the LEATHER Community.



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Leather Scene

by Cain Berlinger

This is a first in the series of interviews with the men and women of color who have done their share to promote the diversity and inclusiveness of the leather community. This month brings you my interview with 1996 International Ms. Leather, Genelle Moore, the sister of International Mr. leather 1984, Ron Moore.

Cain Berlinger: How did it feel to win the IMsl title?

Genelle Moore: At first I was totally shocked, amazed, and totally numb. I went through a stage where I sat back and thought to myself "wow I won." I realized what an important role I was playing in the history of Leatherdom. It's a great feeling

I wanted to connect with as many people as possible in one year, to educate people about the leather community and its various factions. The bottom line is that we are a group of articulate, creative and intelligent individuals.

CB: Some of the advice given to you was not to take 'it' (the title) too seriously. What do they mean by that?

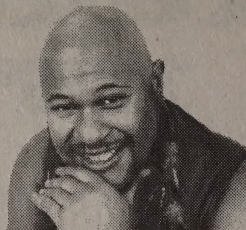
GM: ... not to get wrapped up in other people's agendas and politics; and the politics of the sash. I had a job to complete but I didn't want to lose sight of having fun and connecting with people.

CB: What gave you the courage to try for IMsl?

GM: It was the support of my community, family and friends that gave me the confidence to step forward. I was raised to do the best that I can and to reach for the stars. I never even thought twice that I shouldn't run, once I made the decision to seek the title.

CB: What advice would you give to women wanting to be a part of the women's Leather community?

GM: Get involved. Join a



club, a group, participate in local events and network with others

CB: Who were/are your role models in the Community?

GM: They would be my brother Ron Moore and (author) Dr. Gayle Rubin, because they're the pioneers, who were very strong, brave and powerful people, who were constantly breaking new ground. These are traits I greatly admire in others, and hope to emulate in myself. I have many other role models who share these traits outside of the Community.

CB: A lot of attention has been given to the spouses of title holders coining the phrase "sash widow/er"

GM: My partner, Kathy's role as a sash widow was one of support, at home and on the road. She kept me focused and energized, helping me to laugh when I wanted to cry. She attended as many events as possible with me.

CB: Any final thoughts?

GM: To all that attended IMsl 1997: it meant a great deal to have had your support. Try to attend future IMsls. I was honored to be the IMsl for 1997 and hope I can get to know as many of you as possible in the future.

writercain@aol.com

THY CUP RUNNETH OVER

Murder
by Lynnell
Stephani Long

For the past several months I have read articles about Transsexual women being bashed, raped or murdered. Whether it's in Chicago or somewhere else doesn't matter. What matters is it seems it's open season on Transsexuals. The recent murder of Barretta Williams and the attempted murder of her roommate Pebbles, for some reason hit home.

Maybe it's because it happened on the South Side of Chicago, where I grew up. Maybe it's because Barretta picked these guys up at [a club] where I used to visit every weekend, or maybe it's because I just got tired of ignoring that Black Transsexual women are being murdered more often and no one is saying anything.

Maybe it's because when Matthew Shephard was killed people talked about it for months, and continue to talk about it today. But we all know the truth. The truth is Transsexuals are dispensable. If a Transsexual gets murdered people think, "She must have been deceiving men, and one of them got fed up."

I think Barretta and others like her were killed and it went unreported, or mentioned briefly, because people still allow themselves to be ignorant to Trans issues.

I get envious when I see how the gay and lesbian community stands up against the uprise of gay bashing. After a Transsexual woman is killed I wait for someone to have a candlelight vigil or an anti-bashing demonstration. But nothing. Nothing!

At a recent It's Time, Illinois meeting, Lorraine Sade came out to ask for donations to help the only survivor of the viscous attack, Pebbles. I use her nickname Pebbles because the police fear the murderers might come back to finish the job. When it was mentioned at ITI that a Black Transgendered person is bashed every weekend, they were



stunned. Of course those statistics are based on hearsay because most Trans bashings go unreported. I would like to direct my anger toward the gay & lesbian community because they support their own. I would like to direct my dismay towards the activists that work hard to fight to end the bashings on Halsted Street because Halsted Street travels all the way to the South Side and no one is there protecting my sista's from bashings. But the truth is I'm angry with the Trans Community for not coming together and standing against this hatred. I'm angry because most people in the Trans Community are too busy shaking their ass on stage, trying to blend in to society, partying or just don't give a damn. Those of us who care enough to say or do something are few in numbers.

Lorraine Sade Baskerville came to me and asked if there is something we can do. I wanted to tell her sure, we could march down Halsted, we could demonstrate at the Daley Center or we can support the Black Transgendered organizations in Chicago. The truth is marching down Boys Town won't help. Demonstrating downtown won't mean a thing to the people too busy trying to get to work. What we need to do, what needs to happen is the Black community needs to be educated on the Trans Community. Those that don't oppress us can support us. If we were to demonstrate or march it should be in our own community, since it is our own brother's and sista's that are killing us; Physically and mentally.

I found it difficult to get caught up with the drama at Michigan Womyn's Festival, when my sista's are being murdered or left for

Turn to next page

Tommy Ross is the new miss Continental, crowned Labor Day Weekend in the annual Miss Continental Contest. Photos by Israel Wright



LYNNELL from 22

dead. Did you know when Barretta Williams and her roommate Pebbles were shot, the only reason Pebbles survived is because she was smart enough to play dead? I don't have the time to write an article on women-born-women only spaces. I don't have time to fight separatists that keep oppressing my Trans sista's & brotha's. I do have time to say the Transgendered Community needs your help.

What can you do? You can be open-minded enough to learn to understand us. You can be willing to forget the stereotypes that plague our community. You can open the doors to your organizations and become Trans inclusive. You can treat us like we are human.

They say charity begins at home, but the Transgendered Community doesn't have a home. We don't have a North Halsted Street or a Girl Bar. We don't

have the Belmont Rocks or Hollywood Beach. We don't even have rights to protect us. All we have is each other, and most are too busy to give a damn. It's scary to think that my sista's & brotha's are being murdered because we are different, and we all know it's easy to kill someone who's different from you. The men that shot those two Trans women didn't see their beauty. They didn't recognize their struggle. To them they were two men that dressed as women. To me they are two women that were learning to live as their true selves. The bastards that killed Barretta were gang members and for one of them it was their initiation to the gang to shoot those two sista's. I pray for us all because when they get tired of killing the transnians, they may start killing the faggots & dykes. Then will anyone take notice?

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Pride Atlanta Style

by Sherri Jackson

Black Gay Pride, what does this really mean? Many of us have different meanings and reasons we celebrate. I'd like to think of Black Gay Pride as a 365-day event.

When I think of Black Gay Pride, I recall Angela Davis with her big fro. I imagine Bayard Rustin as he organized the March on Washington, or Ruth Ellis who I hope to be one day; graceful, loving, and a leader. But, one sure picture that sticks in my mind is the two brothers during the Olympics in Mexico City. I read the stories, and heard the talks of this event as a child. Two men standing proud accepting their medals, with fists raised high giving the Black power sign. This was not a militant stance, but a stance of hope, dreams, past and their future. The fist went up to show Black pride, togetherness, peace, unity, and most of all, freedom.

While in Atlanta Sept. 2-6, celebrating Black Gay Pride, I thought of our past, present, and our future as Black folks, Gay and Black. Atlanta's theme for this year was Return to Royalty: Reclaiming Our Heritage, celebrating the Black Les/Bi/Gay/Trans SGL Community. What a time to travel to Atlanta. The weather was great, the Brothers and Sisters looked beautiful as always, on my many visits to Georgia. The weekend was full of parties—Atlanta is known for throwing down some parties. But, this Black Gay Pride event was also about education, honor, and empowerment. Over the past four years, In The Life Atlanta has produced the "Official Black Gay Pride" events, recognized throughout the world. It was started in 1996 by activists, leaders, and community members who believed there was strength and power in the solidarity of the L/B/G/T/SGL community. ITLA was orga-

nized to facilitate the coming together of many organizations and people into a single entity that would provide a united front for addressing issues and conditions that impact the "GAY" community, specifically of color, and particularly of African descent.

The Black Gay Pride event was held at Renaissance Atlanta Hotel, as well as parties throughout the area. Crystal Liddal, assistant director of the event, said in the SOUTHERN VOICE: "The Royalty part is just a recognition that we are all individuals that have something to offer. We don't have to look at ourselves as common people. We are all kings and queens."

Black Gay Pride in Atlanta was full of activities. Sept. 2 started with a Candlelight Vigil in honor of those men and womyn who have struggles with cancer, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, and hate crimes. Sept 3 offered a welcome reception and a fashion show. Sept. 4 was my day to check out the workshops and of course the fine, lovely, ladies. Indeed Atlanta has lovely ladies. The workshops ranged from *Healing Internalized Homophobia*, *Homosexuality/Spirituality/Bible*, *Black Market Gender Reassignment*, and an *S&M Workshop*. Some of the other workshops were *Circle of Sisters* for women only, *Trans Forum*, *Men's Rap*, and *Talking Youth Extended*. For the first time, youth programming was offered throughout the event.

And, yes, I ran into many native Chicago folks. As I walked around I could not believe how the workshops and set-up reminded me a lot of the Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays Unity Conference. I thought "Could spin offs be taking place elsewhere, and if so KUDOS to CBLG!" Just an observation now, before you start calling me. For you poets,

Saturday night offered you a spot at their *Speakfire*.

The folks in Atlanta always show their warm, southern hospitality. If you were tired of workshops, you could shop at their many information and vendor booths. Before I forget to mention, CLIQUE, VENUS MAGAZINE and SOVO/ECLIPSE were the official media sponsors. Check out these magazines—they're Black and gay owned. Also, the weather was hot so you could take a ride up to the 4th floor for a dive, and lots of eye-catching bodies at the many pool parties.

For you brothers looking for a great time, and maybe a pickup, check out the club Fusion's on Friday nights. Yes, ladies, for an eye-full of pleasure Girls In The Night Productions is known for giving a show this entire weekend. Girls in the Night gave you pleasure and parties including a Wet and Wild pool party, and The Recovery Party. Picnic Monday. Did I mention Ms. MC Lyte singer and entertainer was in town for a concert at one of the Girls in the Night parties? Baby, check this one out when in Atlanta. Also, Club Jaquar is a nice spot. For you lesbians and wannabes, My Sisters Place is a lesbian-owned and operated restaurant and bar in Decatur, Ga. This is a nice spot to have dinner or just chill and women watch. For you dancers, and laid-back folks, check out club Tower II. Sorry, guys, mostly women. I spotted author and activist Keith Boykin at the Black Gay Pride event. Keith was also in town to read at Outwrite Books from his latest, *Respecting the Soul*. Playwright Dr. Shirlene Holmes was also spotted.

If you want to sample some of Momma's cooking, stop by Sylvia's Restaurant. This is one of my favorite places to eat. It offers an all-you-can-eat Sunday buffet, live jazz, and some great eye-catching sights. Sylvia's originated in Harlem. There is also Shark Bar, and Gladys Knight's place, famous

for its chicken and waffles.

As always, when in Atlanta I had a tantalizing, great time. One thing that stuck in my mind was the question raised by Roderick Martin (from CLIQUE): "How do we build our community?" Being active myself, I thought there are so many ways. We could start by supporting Black Gay Pride events, locally or nationally. We are all aware of what's called white skin privilege, which may never go away. And of course the color of our Black skin won't change, either. Recall all the Black gay and lesbian leaders who made it easier for all of us. And after I and all the other active folks and members are gone, we will still need people to carry on the struggle. Imagine not having BLACKLINES, which tries to show positive role models, and kill the so-called stereotypes of Blacks. Recall all the Black-owned and operated publications outside Chicago. Are you buying, giving an ad or two? Imagine if we had no conferences, Black gay and lesbian pride events. Does this sound as we would still be sitting at the back of the bus or near the kitchen? Well, even in the 1990s we still occasionally have to take a back seat. Next time you go to something and you do not like it, join and help. Drop a check in the mail if you cannot volunteer.

How do we build our community—by feeling proud first of ourselves, and each other? Maybe one day we will really tackle the issues of our own internalized racism, homophobia, class, gender, and age issues. Sometimes painful to face, but needed to be tackled, always. I am not saying we do not do this. We just need to continue dealing with it. Enjoy Black Gay Pride wherever you celebrate, be it Atlanta or Chicago. Celebrate your Black Gay Pride 365 days Proud and Strong. Remember to celebrate with safety. Kudos Atlanta ... see you next year.

[Look for Atlanta pics in next issue of BLACKLINES.]

PERSONALS

Those who have **VOICE** following their printed introductions have also left recorded introductions. Dial 1 (900) 454-0101.

To keep your free voice box active continuously, you need only continue checking weekly. As long as your box remains active, new respondents using the Browse option, and seeking your profile traits, will be able leave messages.

MEN

Attractive GBM 40+ 5'6" ISO new friendship. Maybe more. Variety of interests. Must be between 35-45, also romantic. **NLBox\$53 (10/13)**

Hi, guys. I am a black male, 48, looking good. Love to have sex. Am a top and quite a loving, nice person. Want a friend, any race. Write to me. **NLBox/Voice \$2915 (11)**

Cock slave. We met at the baths about 4 months ago. You asked me to be your cock slave. I foolishly let you get away. Let's talk. Please write me, with your sun sign, at **PO Box 408744, Chicago, IL 60640** and provide me with two dates with times that we can meet at the baths again. (10)

White Bottom 5'5" ISO mature ordinary gentlemen HIV- any race. You are: lonely, enjoy kissing, cuddling, latsa sex. Be my boyfriend. **VM (773) 995-4091 (10)**

Cock slave. We met at the baths about 4 months ago. You asked me to be your cock slave. I foolishly let you get away. Let's talk. Please write me, with your sun sign, at **PO Box 408744, Chicago, IL 60640** and provide me with two dates with times that we can meet at the baths again. (10)

GWM, tall, dark, lean, 30s, attractive, intelligent, humorous, seeks romantic, hyper-masculine GBM, hopefully for long-term monogamous relationship. **Voice \$2911 (10)**

WOMEN

GBF, ISO GBF over 27. No smokers, drug, alcoholics or studs. If you want to be appreciated, feel desired, experience passion, have stimulating conversation and one romantic, write me. Must have job. Be ready for fun. **NL 308 (10/20)**

Sexy, feminine, GBF, seeking beautiful soft butch/stud for fun and adventure. She must love music, nightlife and legs. **Voice\$2914 (10)**

Rogers Park interracial dyke couple, 31/29, seeks similar couples for urban excursions good food diversion and real conversations. Looking to find community or build one if necessary. Give us a call. **Voice \$2920 (10)**

This very attractive single black lesbian ISO the same for lots of good hot clean fun. She must be honest, trustworthy, caring, gorgeous, intelligent, employed, drug and disease free, mentally stable, have a sense of humor, and have her own transportation. If you're up to 5'4", no more than 120#, between 30 and 40 yrs young and fit the criteria above, then page me. (Please no studs, bisexuals, or heavies) **773 781-7880 (12)**

Sexy, feminine, GBF, seeking beautiful soft butch/stud for fun and adventure. She must love music, nightlife and legs. **Voice\$2914 (10)**

34 y/o GBF who's very difficult, stubborn, verbal, moody and spoiled. ISO a soft stud who's strong enough to deal with a person like myself. No full figure women, race unimportant. **Page 226-5634 (10)**

This very attractive lesbian ISO a playmate for good hot fun. She must be black or of latin descent, fem, attractive, intelligent, have a sense of humor, drug and disease free (light smoker okay), mentally stable, independent, and active (in many ways), between 35-50, 5'1"-5'7" up to 150 #. No studs. **Pages 773 226-1518 (10)**

GBF 40+ professional, playful, serious about success and in search of more out of life — would love to share a stress free, fun filled summer with employed, self assured, drug and disease free spirit(s). No bisexuals, gay experienced preferred. If you are 35-50 years young and want to live in the present and enjoy each moment to the fullest, do not hesitate write or e-mail me at **new e-mail address: ael.com.LOKNAJOYor NL Box 254 (10)**

Personals

How to place an ad:

- The first 20 words are free, each additional word is 25¢. Ads run 2 Months. ADS ARE FOR ONE-ON-ONE MATCHES. Groups wishing to place ads in Personals can do so at CLASSIFIED rates (\$10/30 words for 1 month, 3 months \$27).
- In addition to your ad, send your name, address, home phone & signature.
- You will be assigned a free voice-mailbox number, unless you specify you do not want one. You can record a voice-mail message for free; retrieving messages costs \$1.79 per minute. Upon receipt of your ad, we will send

your voice-mailbox code and info on how to use the system.

- You can rent BLACKLINES mailbox/\$6 per month, if you wish to have written responses forwarded to you; we send them out once a week. (If you have your own PO Box, voice mail #, e-mail or beeper #, we request \$5 per 2 months. We DO NOT accept ads with home address/phone)
- Deadline is 10th of each month for next BLACKLINES. You can also run in Nightlines and Outlines and En La Vida.

How to respond to an ad:

- If an ad ends with an NLV #, you can reply by mail or by phone to that ad (some ads will list an address + a voice-mail # in parenthesis—either send your reply to the address as it appears or reply by voice-mail).

• If ad ends with NL Box #, you can only reply by mail. If it ends with Voice #, you can only reply by phone (written replies will not be forwarded).

- To respond in writing, send letter to the NLV # or NL BOX # specified at the end of the ad, c/o BLACKLINES, 1115 W. Belmont, 2-D, CHICAGO, IL 60657. Respond to all others ads as specified at the end of the ad.
- To leave a voice-mail message (\$1.79/min.), use touchtone phone to call 1-900-454-0101. Punch 1 & 5-digit NLV # or NL voice # to respond to that ad—or punch 2 to listen to people's voice-mail messages. (773) 871-7610 (Tuesdays 9-5 only)

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Cost of the ad:

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Use own PO/Beeper/VM/e-mail, \$5	\$
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Send to: BLACKLINES/Outlines, 1115 W. Belmont, Suite 2-D, Chicago, IL 60657	

THEATRE: No Day like today— 'RENT'

by Lester Davis

When I think of survival, I think about rent being paid first. Well most people should; however being responsible for one's own actions, having compassion and dealing with personal issues is what *Rent* is all about.

Jonathan Larson's 1996 Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning, Broadway musical *Rent* was inspired by Giacomo Puccini's 1896 Opera *La Boheme*. *La Boheme* is a story about four young artists and poets sharing an unheated flat living in Paris in the 1830s. Larson reworked the artistic paradigm of Puccini's structure into a story that would convey an optimistic view of today's complex society. Jonathan Larson died unexpectedly the night after the show's final dress rehearsal of an aortic aneurysm on Jan. 25, 1996.

Michael Grief directs Larson's masterpiece by gripping your heart. *Rent* depicts the struggle of AIDS, homelessness, and urban poverty of artists living in a lofty warehouse in the East Village of New York City, which is similar to Puccini's *La Boheme*. There are eight artists or musicians that not only struggle to pay rent, but deal with life-threatening issues; and express freely their love for one another and their art.

The cast of *Rent* has been announced for the second national touring company (The Benny Company), currently touring North America and appearing at the Shubert Theater, 22 West Monroe in Chicago from through Oct. 10. The cast has eight wonderful main characters with a live band. Pierre Angelo Bayuga (Angel), a drag queen that is responsible for bringing his friends together as a family in the building which they live in, dies later in Act II from AIDS. Horace V. Rogers (Tom Collins), is a computer-age philosopher and Angel's lover. Cristina Fadale (Maureen), is Mark's ex-girlfriend, a protester for the homeless and Joanne's lesbian lover. Danielle Lee Greaves (Joann) is a lawyer who fights against the building being padlocked. Scott Hunt (Mark) is a filmmaker and the show's narrator. Christian Mena (Roger) is a rock 'n' roll musician who is HIV positive and refuses to go to any support group to deal with his status. Julia Santana (Mimi)—an original character taken from *La Boheme*—is an HIV-positive junkie, S&M dancer at a night club in NY who falls in love with Roger. Carl Thornton (Benny), is a former roommate of Mark and Roger and now the new owner of the building where everyone lives.

The musical numbers were composed, orchestrated and choreographed superbly throughout the production. "Light My Candle," a song by Mimi, was what sparked Roger's interest in her, while helping her to look for a bag of dope she lost. "La Vie Boheme/I Should Tell You" is when Roger and Mimi discovered that both them are HIV positive. "Take Me or Leave Me" is a scene where Maureen and Joanne are still rehearsing for a show, but it does not go too well. The frequent words of Roger's libretto— "No day but today"—are strengthened by seriousness and emotion in these performances.

Rent is a musical that touches home to a community (gay and lesbian) that still discriminates against people of color and ignores what is truly missing—love and compassion. *Rent* brought tears to my eyes thinking about the thousands of people we have lost to HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and homelessness right here in Chicago. Jonathan Larson wrote this story to let people in the world know that we still can embrace life. Remember, life is only a temporary lease. Call (312) 902-1500.

COMING OUT OF DARKNESS:

Intimacy

by Sanford Gaylord

I've been wondering how I could write about intimacy for a while now. A recent e-mail from a reader of this column made me think that I should go ahead and give it a try. Intimacy can mean several different things to many people, but I'm referring to the intimate relationships that we may have with our good friends or sexual partners. These relationships can drudge up old issues and sometimes inhibit our acquiring or maintaining a new friend or a sexual partner. It's a challenge at times to lower my own shields and be sociable with people. I have discovered that I need to enjoy the moments: to laugh, play, flirt and not take the world and myself so seriously. It's far too easy to isolate and fall into the habit of not communicating.

In my case, my issues with intimacy were compounded after I tested positive for HIV. Years of losing friends and loved ones to this disease have made it difficult to make new ones. I fear making them only to lose them later. What has helped are support groups that I have attended where I'm around other people who look and talk like me who have traveled the same journey. The recovery process is an ongoing journey; wisdom and live experience are making the work of changing old behavior a lot easier. It's a good thing to remember that we can make time for anything that we truly desire.

With regard to sexual intimacy, I felt like damaged goods for years after receiving my diagnosis. I must admit, sex was the last thing I wanted to think about having with someone. My thinking was that it was the reason that I tested positive after choosing to forgo safer sex. I've realized that it also became one of the reasons that I abstained from having sexual relations with men



for a while. I created many different things to try and fill the void of my desires and need for human touch. Some of them have been productive things that have helped me become the man that I am today: keeping myself busy with a job; pursuing an undergraduate degree, writing, and acting on stage to name a few.

There were times in the past that I would meet a man and be honest about my diagnosis only to deal with his rejection thereafter. That rejection that I received, as well as other brotha's that I know that are honest about their diagnosis concerns me. It concerns me because not everyone that we choose to have intimate sexual relations with are up front with you; many times there is never the mention of HIV or Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's), just getting the 'nut,' bathing in our denial. I'm still honest and up front with men I may encounter and there have been men in my life that have appreciated my honesty. I also have the luxury of being out about my sexuality and sero-status; not everyone has the same luxury. On the other hand, it's not easy 'outing' your sero-status every time one wants to engage with an intimate partner, but it does get easier.

My good friends have said that I should have no problems getting a man but I still have those damn issues to deal with and work through. I'm petrified of catching an STD or compromising someone else's sero-status. An STD on top of an immune system that is already compromised by HIV can be deadly. I know that there is nothing wrong with wanting to have sex

or have an intimate sexual relationship with another person. I'm human and have needs. What's important for us to remember is that we should always try to practice safer sex with each intimate partner regardless of his or her sero-status, using condoms and water-based lubricants for each episode of sexual intercourse.

It's time to make time for it to happen and yet there are those haunting issues that I still need to work through before I choose to date. Just maintaining platonic relationships is hard work, especially those that lead as active a life as you might be. Besides, I need to know where a brotha's head is at in terms of his HIV knowledge. If the brotha happens to be positive I still need to know where his head is. Just because he's HIV+ doesn't mean that he'd be the right one.

Questions or comments? Write me care of BLACKlines or e-mail me at adogaylord@hotmail.com



GURLLLology

by Vicky Nabors

I was sitting on the back porch of my third-floor apartment one evening wondering what the heck I would write about in this column. As I sat watching squirrels play in a nearby tree, I realized that my view of the world from that height was beautiful. In the lush green trees were squirrels and birds enjoying its protective sanctuary. And, the sky was so clear and scenic that it gave me a sense of dreaming. I was shaken back to reality by the movement of airplanes circling above, waiting their turn to land at O'Hare. At that point I began to reflect on the world that I had just envisioned and the world that my flesh and blood body

resided in. Man, a completely different picture emerged before my eyes. Hatred, violence, poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, suffering, religious obsessions, contamination, and greed seemed to be the key elements of my world. My mind floats back to Marvin Gaye's song, "Talk to me, so you can see—What's going on." It seems as if I'm engaged in an ongoing spiritual and emotional battle against the world in which I live.

When I look at my life as a Black lesbian and the lives of those around me who share my ethnicity and orientation, I see many similarities in the ways in which we struggle or have struggled. At the root of these struggles is religion, you know, the church, the pastor, deacons, choir, and ushers. And, from my catholic experience, the mass, nuns, father, rosary, Hail Mary's repeated numerous times, and confession. I'm on a roll now, and then there is my friend's struggle over Jehovah, and another who struggles with Buddha, and don't forget Allah. It doesn't make a difference what name you grew up calling your creator; my point is that many of you can relate to this religious experience.

Children, raised within the confines of a religious organization, are persuaded (brain-washed) over time to accept specific beliefs as the truth. Children don't have problems with these traditions because it provides the structure that they need in their young lives. The problem occurs when we grow up. As we step out into our adult life, many will pursue dreams and goals while others are just beginning to feel their way through life. This is often where the problem occurs. Many will fulfill career goals yet struggle with their inner-self while other women never seem to get a solid grip on life. But, we move on and try to look at the positive, ignoring the negative. It is at this point in the road where many Black lesbians find themselves

Turn to page 28

BLACK PEARLS

by Sukie de la Croix

Excerpts from an interview with Connie

What was your first gay bar?

"In the Black areas they had a lot of small lounges. Actually, Mommy O's was the major, major lounge during that time. I came out six months to a year too late to go to Mommy O's, but it deserves a nominal mention if nothing else. But I think the first place I went to was in 1963, and it was called the Fiesta Lounge. It was on 43rd and Drexel. A friend of mine took me out and that's where everybody was going, so it was just that simple. There isn't anything really great that I can say about it, except everybody hung out there. It was basically a straight place, but they gave us Friday or Saturday night. It was all Black women in there. It wasn't a very great area even then. I didn't live in the neighborhood, but that's where we hung out at. It was kind of big, it had booths on one side, then a bar on the other side, then a big dance floor in the middle."

Role-playing ...

"I don't know about the other communities, but on the South Side we role-played, the butches were really into the men's clothes and the ladies were really frilled and feminine. The butches would be like gentlemen and ask us to dance and we did dance together. If there were any guys in the lounges I went to, most of the time they didn't bother us, they would very seldom ask us to dance. They gave us a kind of respect."

Kitty Kat Club ...

"I sure did go to the Kitty Kat Club, now that was a big place, compared to the Fiesta Lounge, and that was a mixed lounge. We had our spot though, we all sat on one side of the wall, I'll put it like that, I don't know how to explain it any better. They left that part for us. Straight people sat in the

other areas and we danced together. We were ourselves wherever we went. The only problem we had was with the police; during that time they would lock up the studs for wearing fly-front pants. I went to jail myself a couple of times. I know once me and a lover was walking down the street and the police stopped us, and there was Stone, he would really hassle all the gay women, and all the gay guys too. He was a real terrible person. He would lock us up ... my charge was disturbing the peace. The charges would all be thrown out, so I didn't care. But I thought it was the worst thing in the world, winding up going to jail for nothing."

Did the community accept lesbians and gay men?

"Yes, I'd have to say they did, those of us that accepted ourselves, they did. I didn't have any problems getting an apartment, me and my lover. They knew that we were a couple, our friends weren't hassled, and they never made me feel like I wasn't a part of everything. Or that I was 'different.'"

Maxine's ...

"That was on 79th Street and that was a real nice place. Maxine owned that lounge and she had a husband, and she used to mess around ... but I don't know if her husband knew about that. But she owned it, and she opened it up to us wide open. When that bar closed down she just disappeared off the face of the Earth."

Sons of Sappho ...

"I went to the Sons of Sappho's Balls. It was mostly girls, a ladies club, and they gave the affair every year, and the lesbians dressed up like men, with their lady friends. It was like going out to a real high class thing. They would have a show, like singers and people to perform, and they had some good entertainment. This was in the late '60s. As a matter of fact, they had just started having the Balls then. About 300-400 people turned up. It was

packed, wall to wall. I'm trying to think if there were any men there, I'm sure there had to have been, because a couple of my friends were gay guys and they used to hang out with me. But it wasn't in a bar that they felt they could get into. Most of the guys went to the other Balls. The person that would win the King, won a trophy. It was a long time ago."

Hyde Park Lounge ...

"There was one that was a kind of a sawdust trail but everybody went there and it was called the Hyde Park Lounge, and it was on 63rd and Kenwood. Both groups went there, guys and girls. It was a straight bar and liquor store. Like I said, I don't know how we would wind up going to these places, I never figured it out. But suddenly this was the place to go and even though it was a sawdust trail we would get dressed up and go there."



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Any gay political groups in the '70s ...

"No, I was always too afraid to come out from under the covers. I supported things, but I wouldn't get involved where my name would appear. And actually, the Blacks didn't have that many, we kind of did things in a haphazard way, if it happened ... fine, if it didn't ... which was sad and pitiful, but that's just the way it was then. Most of the groups that I knew about on the South Side seemed to be into having a good time. If you were involved in a relationship and trying to keep the police

officers like Stone from bothering you when you were trying to go out ... and that's a whole other side of it, the way we lived, just as an individual and not on the social scene. But on the social side we were trying to go out and have a nice time without being hassled or arrested."

Gangs ...

"The Black Stone Rangers at that time was the baseball team and they used to protect us oddly enough. I'll never forget that the Black Stone Rangers at the time was a nice group of guys, but later they were the same guys that wound up killing and everything. And that was during the time I was going to the Hyde Park Lounge. Back then they were a whole different frame of thought; they weren't as mean-looking as they became, just nice little kids ... they were a baseball team. They would come in the lounge, and there were a lot of guys coming in, there, but if anyone was hassled they would step right up and say, 'Leave her alone.' And it wasn't in a belligerent manner, but we knew them all, the whole group, the beginning group of gang members."

Day to day ...

"It was difficult keeping a job, almost impossible, a lot of us didn't work. I was lucky to find a job and keep it, but some of my friends wasn't able to get jobs, or if they would, then they couldn't keep them. The butcher ones, that was unacceptable on the work force. A lot of them had a real tough time being themselves and working. Now if they were willing to put on a dress and wear lipstick then yes they could. But they wouldn't keep it up. Most of them didn't do it everyday. I had a couple of friends who put on dresses and went to work and wore make up every day and they made it. The other ones didn't. Not until later, when they had like security officers ... I guess more jobs opened up in what was considered a man's field."

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What's The '411'

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SEX AT THE GYM?!

Dear Readers:

We are family, folks. And sometimes as a family, we need to clear the air about occurrences at home (in this case, in our community). Yes, it's time for a family chat, so stop what you're doing and pull up a chair. Grab some coffee or your favorite beverage. Are you comfortable? Good. Now, I have a question to ask. Is it just me or has cruising at the gym becoming a tad bit ridiculous? Before we dive into this highly sensitive topic, let me clarify this discussion. Let me be crystal clear: I'm not speaking about someone who may look or glance at another person across the gym floor and comment "this guy/girl is hot or cute." I'm also not referring to body admiration (i.e.: someone looking at another person's arms or chest saying

'I want to work on mine a bit more.'). I'm talking about guys who specifically go to the gym, bypassing all the exercise equipment, making a beeline for the showers to masturbate and/or have anonymous sex. Now, do I have your attention? Good!

Having said this comment, in all probability, I haven't said anything that isn't already known. Many in the GLBT community know that there are several gyms notorious for their cruisy nature. However, the question becomes, is a gym a place to condition one's body or one's groin? Is the establishment a gym, first, and then a public sex environment, or vice versa? I mean the thought that a fair number of GLBT men and women actually go to the gym to work out and not be "worked" (picked up) is not a ludicrous idea, folks!?! Some may be thinking: "WHAT? He/She wishes to have a

decent weight lifting experience free from "sexual sharks"?

YES! But instead of being respected, quite often, these individuals may become labeled as "prudish," "stuck up," or "tired" for choosing not to participate in sexual "favors" offered by others. Let me be clear regarding my own position. While I'm certainly not anti-sex, What part of "no" don't folks understand? No should mean no. Period. End of the discussion!

And so, I will restate the question: in your opinion, is there ever a time that it becomes inappropriate not to be sexual in a public environment? One specific reason that I'm asking again is due to a recent incident that occurred at my gym. About two weeks ago, a heterosexual male was complaining to a gym locker attendant that he did not feel comfortable taking a shower due to all the sexual acts at the gym. Many gay/bi gym members overheard this rather loud and intense conversation. Most stated that the straight male just should leave the club. "This is our gym and this is just a part of our culture, so just get over it!" One young male commented.

When he stated, "this is a part of our culture" statement, it stuck me as a serious *Hmm* moment. My thoughts accelerated. I concluded that I would not agree with the young gay male's comment. Can public sexual behavior be so easily categorized as a GLBT "cultural event"? Was the young gay man really saying that with all the testosterone raging, he just has to have the brother standing in the next shower stall at the gym or he will just

explode?? The first question that popped into my head was: if you're interested in the guy, why not ask him out on a date, or invite him to a private space for sex and go from there? Another question, y'all: what if the shoe was on the other foot? There was a heterosexual couple in the shower rubbing their groins and having intercourse? Would you feel comfortable? I know I wouldn't and vice versa, I still do not feel comfortable when we in the GLBT community choose to participate in the same behavior. In this case, I would have to agree with the heterosexual male. There were also other gay members who did also agree with the gay male in the locker room as well. It's a public gym. Everyone is entitled to the facility.

In addition, another point of interest: what if the workout establishment chooses to tape the shower room activity? Why risk the embarrassment of being tape recorded and/or prosecution? Besides, if it's all about the "thrill," there are other avenues available for the thrill seekers. If you are into more decadent sexual adventures, there are other establishments available, such as bathhouses and bookstores that could provide far more safety than a gym locker room.

Although, we are apart of the same GLBT family, we are not all monolithic in thought! We have different tastes. In my humble opinion, we are all accountable for our actions, including those of a sexual nature. In short, our actions can speak a lot louder than our words. But, let's try to be respectful of each other. You may not agree but everyone is entitled to their opinion. This happens to be my food for thought. Whatever your thang is, remember, Smart Sex is always a must!!

Until next time, Peace and Blessings readers. Questions? Comments? By all means, email me a note: PrestonMSW@aol.com

about you my sistas? You either support the system and privately struggle or you work to free yourself from it and enjoy a sense of rebirth through freeing your mind. Deep thought is our birthright, but those in power creatively take our ability to think for ourselves away. Here are some things to think about, why do more women attend church than men? Are God's words so small that they fit neatly in a book written my man?

People interpret the Bible in their own way and everyone's interpretation is designed to give them power or to prove a point. I am a Christian because I love my God, but I am not a religious woman, there is a difference and my world is beautiful.

Vicnabors@aol.com

VICKY from 26
confused and angry because they can't seem to find that inner peace. It all leads back to our early religious programming. We were raised to believe that the lifestyle that we lead is wrong and sinful. So, we struggle daily with the two lives that we are forced to lead, we lie to others and ourselves. It is not an easy thing to deprogram your soul because religious teachings penetrate our souls.

Many outspoken women in our community have escaped, but the majority of you my sistas, have not. I feel blessed that I was pulled out of my confused state by an elder Black sista from a local church. I slowly began to see my position in life and fully understood the answers to my struggles. What

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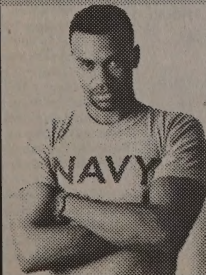
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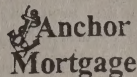


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World View: World Wide Web

by Andrew Davis

You BET!

BET Holdings is taking its Black Entertainment Television brand to the Web with BET.com. BET lined up Microsoft Corp., Liberty Digital, and USA Networks to fund the joint venture with \$35 million in seed money.

BET Chairman Robert Johnson is championing BET.com as the most significant economic investment on the Internet by an African-American-owned company. BET Holdings already operates BET (a general programming cable channel), BET on Jazz, and BET/Starz!, a pay-movie channel. Despite its powerful allies, BET will keep majority ownership of the new Web venture.

BET.com will act as a portal for African Americans, covering relevant issues in news, entertainment, sports, education,

health, finance, technology, and travel. The site will offer e-mail and instant messaging services and interactive chat communities.

Also, BET says the site will market and sell products and services that focus on the African-American market, such as urban apparel, books, music, and beauty care products. ("Ah, the pleasure of Dark and Lovely...")

BET.com is slated to kick off in November and on-line shopping capabilities in time for the holiday season.

▼▼▼▼

National Coming Out Day is October 11. If you're wrestling with identity issues or thinking of the best way to break the news to Grandma, consult sites like Coming Out (www.lambda.org/coming-out.htm) and Coming Out to Your Parents (www.libertynet.org/plag/brochure.html). Also, check out National Coming Out Day for African Americans (abacus.oxy.edu/qrd/www/culture/black/discussion/cominghome.html), a cerebral discussion of the implications coming out has for Blacks.

▼▼▼▼

Contact me at geminil@nwu.edu.

F.Y.I. Resources

Predominantly Black Gay Clubs

CLUB ESCAPE, M.W.D., 1530 E. 75th St.	773-667-6454
CLUB INTA'S 308 W. Erie, Girls Night Thurs	312-664-6595
CLUB INTIMUS (only Sat, 9p-3a)	
312 W. Randolph, W.D.	312-901-1703
JEFFERY PUB 7041 S. Jeffery, MW, D, 4	773-363-8555
CLUBHOUSE AT CONVENT MW, D,	
1529 Armitage, MONDAYS 11p-4a	773-395-8660
K.C. Productions at Cotton Club, Sundays	312-341-9787
MENAGE 738 N. Clark, 2nd fl, MWS	312-932-9289
THE RAILS AT PROP HOUSE, 1675 N. Elston,	
MW, D, The Rails@aol.com	708-902-1705

OTHER Clubs OF INTEREST

BELRIN 954 Belmont, MW, V, 4, S	773-348-4975
BIG CHICKS 5024 N. Sheridan, S/G, WM, 11a-2a/3a	773-728-5511
BUDDIES' REST/BAR 3301 Clark, MW, R	773-477-4066
CHICAGO EAGLE, M.L., 5015 N. Clark	773-728-0050
CLUB INTA'S 308 W. Erie, Women Thurs., Men Sun.	312-664-6595
CIRCUIT 3641 N. Halsted, Salsa, etc.	773-325-2233
GIRLBAR, 2625 N. Halsted, W.D.	773-871-4210
LITTLE JIM'S 3501 N. Halsted, M, 4	773-871-6116
MAN'S COUNTRY 5017 N. Clark, M, B	773-878-2069
MOUNTAIN MOVING COFFEEHOUSE	312-409-0276
ROSCOE'S 3354-6 N. Halsted, MW, D, V, E, Cafe 773-281-3355	
SIDETRACK 3349 N. Halsted, M, V	773-477-9189
SPIN, Halsted & Belmont, MW, D	773-327-7711
TEMPTATIONS 10235 W. Grand, Franklin Park, W, D, V, E, 4	
(Sa Fri/Sat)	847-455-0008

Resources

AA/Newtown Alano Club	773-529-0321
Active Proud Black Lesbians and Gays	773-493-3848
Adodi African-American men	312-458-9584
Affinity, creating a South Side community center	
P.O. Box 496002, Chicago, IL 60649	773-324-0377
African American Womyn's Alliance	773-371-0279
A Real Read—African-American Lesbian/Gay Trans Performers	
www.uic.edu/orgs/arealread	312-409-2457
BLACKLINES, Lambda Pub/OUTLINES	
1115 W. Belmont, #2-D, 60657 (FAX) 773-871-7609	773-871-7610
Brother 2 Brother Chicago BRO2BROCHI@aol.com	
P.O. Box 496024, Chicago 60649	
BROTHERS C.A.N. (Community Awareness Network)	
Programming	773-752-7867
Brothers United Together H.V., men/Afric Descent	773-752-7867
Chicago Black Lesbians & Gays	
P.O. Box 14811, Chicago, IL 60614-1181	312-409-4917
Chicago Black Pride	773-288-2078
chicagoblackpride@yahoo.com	
Lakeside Pride Freedom Band	773-381-6693
Church of the Open Door FAX (773) 778-0178	773-778-3030
Black lesbian/gay/trans/heterosexual Church, 5954 S. Albany	
The Committee, 2300 N. Clybourn, #32, 60614	773-235-0295
GAMBA: Discussion for men of African Descent	773-752-7867
Greater Chicago Committee, P.O. Box 146642	60614-6642
Healthline 312-661-9153, prevent 773-674-0429	312-670-9660
Harambe Jahard Suburban Afric-Amer. BI/GayMen	708-445-2584
Horizons Community Services	773-929-HELP
Howard Brown Health Center	773-388-1600
Imani Umoja, Chicago Afric-Amer BI/Gay men	773-907-8993
Last House on the Block G&L in recovery	773-373-0024
Lesbian Community Cancer Project	773-561-4662
Les Femmes Amies	312-232-0787
Men of All Colors Together/Chicago, PO Box	
408922, 60640-8922	312-409-6916
Minority Outreach Intervention Proj, FAX 312-986-0928	
1255 S. Wabash, Suite 2-S, 60605	312-986-0661
National Black L&G Leadership Forum	202-483-6786
Onyx/Chicago leather/men, 1340 Irving, #188, 60613	
PAC Social Club, PACSOCIALC@aol.com	
Phrassory parties for all lesbians and gays	312-409-6637
Roseland Community Hospital	773-995-6469
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1718 E. 75th St., 60649	773-752-7867
Test Positive Aware/Brothers United in Support	773-404-8726
Toussaintian Brothers of Illinois	847-625-7263
TransGenesis trans support	800-805-4052
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Women of All Colors Together	773-267-0976, (708) 869-9120
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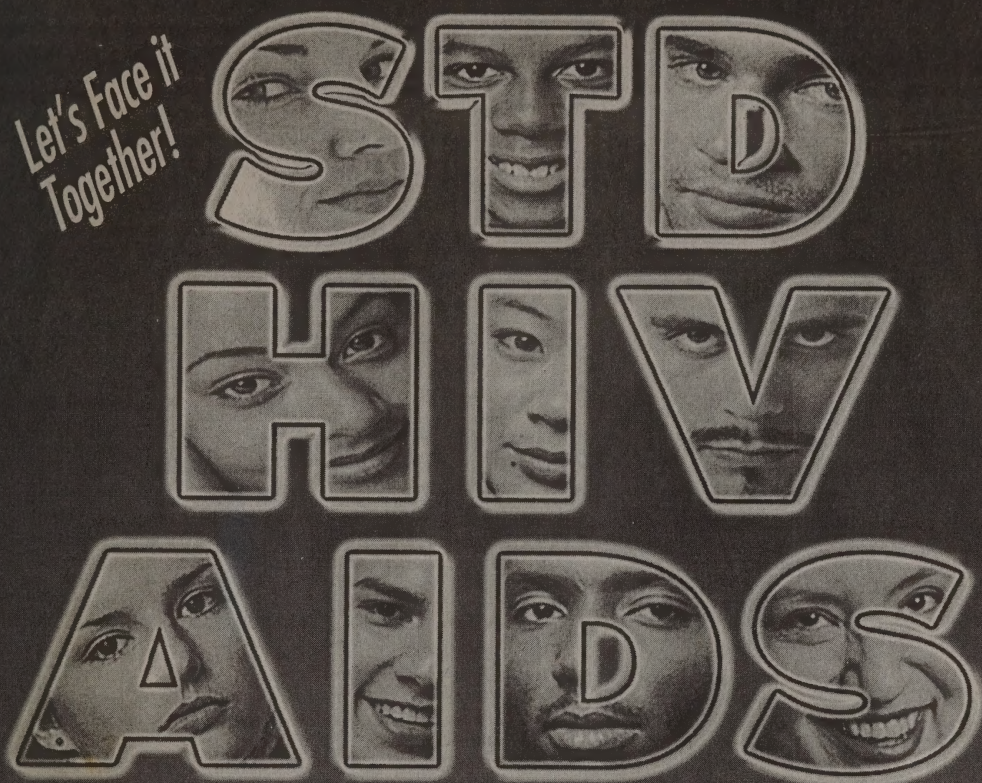
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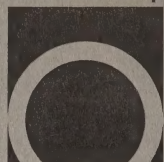
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